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A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF SIR HENRY HAVELOCK, Bart. K.C.B.

BY REV. WILLIAM BROCK, D.D.

Fifth Edition, Crown 8vo, 4s. 6d.

THE LIFE OF REV. RICHARD KNILL OF ST. PETERSBURGH.

BY REV. C. M. BIRRELL.

THE LIFE

OF

WILLIAM BROCK, D.D.

Ballantyne Press
BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.
EDINBURGH AND LONDON

I am, My beloved friend
Yours ever affectionately
William Beebe

LONDON. JAMES NISBET & Co. 21 BERNERS STREET.

THE LIFE

OF

WILLIAM BROCK, D.D.

FIRST MINISTER OF BLOOMSBURY CHAPEL, LONDON.

B 2017

BY

CHARLES M. BIRRELL,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF RICHARD KNILL OF ST. PETERSBURGH."

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Preface.

It is not easy to determine when the memoir of a man's life ought to be written. Neither eminence of station, nor worth of character, nor a multitude of friends, can solve the problem. All these may be present together, and yet the means of enshrining his memory in a book may not exist. Several public men, who deeply impressed their contemporaries, have departed from us in recent years, without leaving anything which serves to hand down the distinct knowledge of them to another generation.

The appearance of this volume implies the belief that there is no such deficiency in the present instance; but it is a belief which has grown slowly with the growth of the narrative, and is even now held with deference. The love which the writer bore to the subject of the biography, beginning in his friend's

college days, and extending over the whole course of his ministry to the close of his life, together with the ardent desire of others to have something which should be a sort of substitute for his visible presence, may have had more than its apparent influence over the conclusion.

But there was a series of interesting autobiographical letters which it seemed a pity to suffer to remain unknown, and which, when accompanied by the more familiar facts of the history, appeared fitted to kindle the courage of true faith in hearts warring with the difficulties of early life, or with the anxieties inseparable from positions of great influence on the happiness of men.

A sincere sense of obligation must be expressed to all who promptly sent communications, whether important or unimportant. In the former of these classes were the Annals of the Church in Bloomsbury, arranged and elucidated by its pastor's faithful friend, Mr. James Benham: a service crowned by the permission to engrave the portrait painted at his instance, and afterwards by him presented to the congregation. The reader will not need to be told how much is due, for his interesting notes, to the Rev. Andrew Reed, B.A., of St. Leonard's, who, during his residence in

Norwich, formed with the venerated John Alexander and William Brock a friendship of "threefold cord," strong and unbroken. To an even greater extent will the work be found to be indebted to the Rev. William Brock of Hampstead, whose modesty was proof against all entreaties to assume the natural part of biographer, which, though a son, he would have performed with not less impartiality than ability. The regret occasioned by his decision is at once increased and mitigated by the invaluable chapter of filial memories which closes the volume, and without which it certainly would not have been complete.

BLACKHEATH, LONDON,
13th November 1877.

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Devon.

"It will not be amiss if, in the first place, I do in a few words give you a hint of my pedigree and manner of bringing up, that thereby the goodness and bounty of God towards me may be the more advanced and magnified before the sons of men."

—JOHN BUNYAN.

Chapter First.

"Dieu se câche dans le détail des choses humaines, et il se dévoile dans l' ensemble."—*Lamartine.*

WILLIAM BROCK never ceased to love the quiet Devonshire town of Honiton, in which he opened his eyes on St. Valentine's Day, 1807. The traveller towards the west, although rushing past with the modern speed, may notice the summit of its church tower, soon after the spire of Salisbury Cathedral, on the one side, and the rich gothic windows of Sherborne Minster on the other, have successively filled his thoughts with their historical associations.

Although so near to the busy line of communication, the place retains the repose of the former time, and answers as accurately as ever to the kindly descriptions of the old topographers. "This towne," says one, "claymes prioritie for antiquitie before many others." "It is a very pretty town," says another, "indifferently well built, and sweetly seated for both corn and pasture." "Situated," continues a third, "in a delightful vale on the south side of the river Otter, it commands a fine view of the adjacent country." "But for the name," observes Westcote, passing, after the easy manner of antiquaries, into the realm of fancy for his etymology,

"yf I should say yt was taken from the abundance of honye there made or found, I persuade myself you would smyle, and yet that may not be altogether sans reason in regard of the hills adjoyning, on which abundance of thyme grows, with which these pretye creatures are much delighted and feed most willingly thereon."

It is well known that about the middle of the sixteenth century, when times were hard in Holland, some of the best of her people came over to seek liberty of worship under our Protestant Queen. Among these, a few who held peculiar views of the Trinity, of baptism, and of war, slipped into the small towns of our southern coast; but finding that for such opinions as theirs there was as little tolerance in England as in their own country, they crept into the more sequestered parts of Devon, where they were allowed, with only occasional interruptions, to remain in peace.

That their speculative views of the person of Christ, whatever they were, did not, at least at first, affect their trust in His redeeming power, appears from the written confession of two of them, who, having gone to London, were imprisoned, and afterwards burned in Smithfield—the first martyrs in the reign of Elizabeth.*

* The legally-recognised Dutch Congregation appears to have pleaded earnestly for their lives, and so did Foxe the martyrologist in a Latin letter to the Queen, of which Thomas Fuller gives a translation, and then says: "Though Queen Elizabeth constantly called him her *Father Foxe*, yet herein she was no *dutifull daughter*, giving him a flat deniall.

In a touching introduction, they say: "We poor and despised strangers, who are persecuted for the testimony of Jesus, desire that God may grant all mankind peace, so that they may live together in all godliness to the praise of the Lord and to the advancement of their own salvation," and then declare: "We seek no salvation in our works, as it is reported we do; but we hope to be saved alone through the merits of our Lord Jesus. Nor do we boast that we are without sin, but always confess ourselves sinners before God."

Neither could they have been guilty of insubordination to civil authority, for they add: "We are accused of not being subject to the magistrates because we do not baptize our infants. To this we reply, we desire to submit to the magistracy in all things not contrary to the Word of God. That we do not suffer our children to be baptized by the priests is not done out of temerity, but out of fear to God, for Christ commands only believers to be baptized."

They conclude their fruitless appeal to the Queen's compassion in language remarkable for manly dignity and the true martyr-spirit: "Finally, we are men, and what is farther, unlearned men, who are liable to err. Hence we are willing to submit to the instruction of all those who are able to prove to us by the Scriptures

Hereupon the writ, *de heretico comburendo*, which for seventeen years had hung up only *in terrorem*, was now taken down and put into execution."—Fuller's Ch. Hist., 16th Cent., 104. Evans' Hist. Eng. Bap. v. i. 153.

something that is better; but that men should constrain us by fire and sword appears to us to be vain, and to militate against reason; for it is possible to constrain us through fear of death to speak differently from what we understand; but that we should understand differently from our belief, ye are well aware is impossible."

William Brock, the father of the subject of this Memoir, believed that he was descended from a family, of the same nation and of similar opinions, which at that time found refuge in the vale of Honiton. The name gives colour to the belief, and the belief itself had no inconsiderable influence in producing the independent and freedom-loving spirit by which he seems to have been distinguished. At the time of his birth, his parents were associated with a church of which we meet with some traces not far from the end of the sixteenth century, and which, having been absorbed in the Presbyterian Congregation during the Commonwealth, emerged from it about a century later and reassumed its distinct existence. The views, however, which had been entertained, at the earlier period, of the person of our Lord, had passed, probably under influences then in general operation in this country, into Arian, and, eventually, definite Unitarian doctrine. With this creed they united the practice of believers' immersion, so that they might be called briefly Unitarian Baptists. The chapel which they had built was at the lower part of the town; and between them and the orthodox con-

gregation, which continued to worship at the other extremity of the ascending street, there was no friendship. It was, therefore, not to the gratification of his parents that symptoms of falling away from their faith were observable in this son. The writings of Dr. Doddridge, which were tolerated in such families during that transitional period, had produced on him very serious impressions; and a desire to see the world having led him to settle for some time in London, he was brought into religious society and under an evangelical ministry, so that, on his return to Honiton, he was baptized at the "Lower," but united to the Church at the "Higher" meeting—a step involving a separation from his family which was never forgiven. His brother's son, Dr. George Brock, who rose to eminence as a medical practitioner at Wellington, and himself a Unitarian, says that he "had it from his father that William was no favourite with his widowed mother, who disliked him much in consequence of his adoption of opposite religious beliefs to those of his parents." This antipathy, considering the maternal instincts which must have fought against it, had a strange persistence, for it continued quite through his life. But while it embarrassed and pained him, it did not affect his purpose. He was conciliatory, but firm. His own son, the subject of this biography, who inherited his spirit, thus records with filial reverence the character which grew in that atmosphere:—

"His religious principles induced him to engage in

evangelical labours in the town and the surrounding villages. He was one of the first Sunday-school teachers in Devonshire, and one of the first distributors of such religious books and tracts as were then to be obtained. More than once he came under the notice of the local magistracy, his religious operations being regarded as a mere pretence for accomplishing sinister, political designs. In one instance, a charge to this effect was distinctly made against him, and but for the prompt and manly interference of the Rev. Dr. Honeywood, the rector of Honiton, William Brock would have been presently lodged in Exeter Gaol. In the midst of these annoyances he was accustomed to refer with admiration to the example of his earliest English ancestors."

His life, however, was by no means without sunshine. The people to whom his religious convictions had conducted him cultivated a good deal of pleasant social intercourse. They did not travel so far from home as their descendants do, nor were they so much united in enterprises common to all the churches of the country, but they seem all the more to have delighted in those local assemblies in which cordial fraternal greetings were interwoven with religious services. The representatives, young and old, of the little communities of inland Devon repaired to those periodical gatherings with something like the joy with which the Jews travelled to their gladsome festivals.

One of those, whose presence on these occasions was

hailed with universal pleasure, was the daughter of the Rev. Thomas Alsop, the recently-deceased pastor of the church at Prescot.* The testimony yet lingers on the spot that she was endowed with a genial disposition and a sound judgment, besides possessing, as her son fondly said, "a voice which was the very cheerfulness of music," and altogether of such general grace as to have been pronounced the Hebe of the church festivals. At all events, she gained and requited the love of the Honiton visitor, in whose copy of Doddridge's "Rise and Progress" there is inscribed this short and devout record:—"On the 14th of May 1806, were married, at Culmstock, by the Rev. Mr. Windsor, William and Ann Brock, who pray for the Divine blessing on their union."

They started on the same day on their homeward journey, not in chaise and pair, but on a single horse, with caparison of saddle and pillion, a style which enabled travellers to beguile their way with confidential dialogue. When at sunset they turned the summit of St. Cyrus, and were beginning the descent with apprehensions of the curious criticisms of their neighbours, they were hailed on the way with so many hearty welcomes that they dropped from their steed with some confidence, and began a married life, though brief, of pure happiness.

* Rev. Thomas Alsop was a descendant of Rev. Vincent Alsop, M.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge, who was ejected for Nonconformity in 1662, and afterwards exercised his ministry in Westminster. He there died in 1703.—*Calamy*, iii. 48.

"The 14th of February came in the year 1807," writes our William Brock the younger, "when, lo! I appeared on the scene. My father seems to have been overdone with admiration of his boy, for an old acquaintance of his informed me he took me, within a few weeks of my birth, to the higher meeting on a Sunday morning, and gave out the hymns there, as was his custom, with me, in my very superfluous long clothes, in his arms."

A little sister followed in 1808, and a brother, who lived only a few weeks, in 1809. The income of the family, at the time of the marriage, was not large, but the expenditure being adjusted to it, there was enough, with a little to spare. "Soon, however," run the reminiscences which shall now be largely quoted, "times became severe at Honiton, as indeed all through the country, and the most industrious and frugal persons obtained with difficulty a competent livelihood. Riots were frequent, particularly on market days, in respect to the high price of provisions. I just remember being told by my mother, a year or two after this, that we could have bread, only every other day.

"Towards the close of 1810, my father became an invalid, having suffered a good deal from a blow which he had received, according to some reports, accidentally; according to other reports, in a struggle with an ill-disposed person, whom, as the constable of the parish for the time being, he had had to take into custody.

'Jem French,' an old workman of my father's, resolutely maintains that the latter is the correct report. In whatever way the blow was received, it wrought mischievous and at length fatal results.

"On the first day of January 1811, a third boy was born, and though my father was just then a great sufferer and confined to his bed, he was made somewhat happy after the old manner, and would have Daniel, as he was called, brought frequently into his room. The disease gained power every day, notwithstanding the skill and attention of Drs. Lloyd and Robertson. Once or twice a surgical operation was performed. Very vivid is my recollection, as I am writing, of being called one day to the bedside, just before one of the operations. There were the doctors, and there were the instruments. How plainly do I see them now! My memory does not serve me as to what was said to me; but my mother has assured me that the sufferer exhorted me most tenderly to love Jesus, and as he was going soon to die, to be sure and follow him to heaven.

"Over the bureau in our sitting-room was a shelf, with the very few but very good books which my father used: among them Scott's 'Commentary,' in three quarto volumes, which he had bought in honour of his marriage. I have seen him take one or other of these down after service on Sunday mornings, and then, leaning his head on his two upraised hands, give himself to the examination of the passage that he had

there before him—probably the passage on which Mr. Gibbons had been preaching. Thus all that I can call to mind about my father relates to the religious and the good. How pleasant this is to me, I cannot tell you. Such a parentage as mine was better to me than rubies. I feel it to have been to me beyond all price!

"On the 20th of June 1811, my precious mother was left a widow with her three fatherless ones. No king of terrors had death been to her husband; the peace which passeth all understanding had kept his heart and mind by Christ Jesus, and entrance had been ministered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. She sorrowed, therefore, not as one who had no hope. My mother took me to the coffin once—only once! and said, 'Will you not be a good man and go to heaven too?' Oh, the fondness of that mother's voice in putting that mother's question! It falls with strangest sadness and sweetness on my ear again. I seem to be the little orphan boy by my father's coffin now, little understanding, little comprehending all that my mother meant, and yet understanding and comprehending enough to answer, 'I will try to be a good man, and go to heaven too.'

"Who can tell what God was doing upon my heart then? Not too much is it, I think, to suppose that the prayers of maternal solicitude in that chamber of death were the effectual prayers that avail much. My

sister and brother were, of course, unconscious altogether of the bereavement they had sustained. I seemed to be sensible of it, as my mother has told me, beyond what, at my age, could have been expected.

"Having taken counsel with the few friends on whose prudence and kindness she could rely, my mother determined to carry on the business as best she could; trusting, under God, to the continued support of those by whose patronage it had hitherto been sustained. It was an onerous and unpromising undertaking. The hardness of the times waxed worse and worse. Her knowledge of the several branches of the trade was inadequate at best. Several of my father's relatives were unfriendly in the extreme. Competition was increased, and threatened disastrous results almost at once. There seemed nothing for the fatherless and widow but penury and distress. It looked as though they must come to want.

"But though living very much—she and her little ones—from hand to mouth, yet they lived, on and on, their bread being given them, and their water sure.

"If ever God's gracious promises were fulfilled to any good man's survivors, they were fulfilled to my mother, to my sister and brother, and to me. Many a time since, when I have been speaking to, and praying with, widowed and orphaned ones, have I had, through our own experience, a real unction and a conscious power of sympathy and faith. In our humble residence at Honiton, devoid as it was of much that would now

be deemed convenient, if not necessary, we knew how the blessing of God 'maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow.' I well remember it as the abode of simplest contentment and quiet congenial peace. Blessing on the memory of my widowed mother! Reason beyond all my power of expression have I for holding her in everlasting remembrance."

Chapter Second.

"What if he hath decreed that I shall first
Be tried in humble state and things adverse,—
Who best
Can suffer, best can do."

—*Paradise Regained.*

THE memory of the first home, though coloured by such touching experiences, was a thing of joy throughout life, and it was fortunate that at least the first step over its threshold conducted to something of the same gentle character.

"My first schoolmistress was a venerable woman, who merely undertook to teach little children to read and spell the small words. Her name was Patrick, and she was of great age when I was first committed to her care. Her appearance and manners were prepossessing. What she did, she did well. She never punished beyond pinning a juvenile culprit to her apron, or tying his foot to her chair. Generally we were as happy as birds, not getting, I dare say, the knowledge or the discipline of the modern infant school — getting a little, however, pretty well, and being kept out of harm's way."

The next stage in the process of education was more

serious, and brought the first taste of life's hardships. His maternal grandmother had married her first husband's successor in the pastorate of the church in Culmstock, and he, to his other labours, had added those of a boarding-school. With what feelings and after what manner the spirited boy was despatched to that establishment, his own pen will describe:—

"It was a sore trouble to me to leave my mother—a very sore trouble indeed. There was, it is true, the alleviation arising from a residence with my grandmother, whom I had begun to love dearly in her occasional visits to Honiton. There were also an aunt and uncle, Thomas, living at Benshayne, not far from Culmstock. There were several maternal relatives besides, of whose kindness to me, I was told, I might rest quite assured.

"On the day appointed, a donkey, which had been specially procured, came up to our backdoor (I see the animal there now), and presently a sort of saddle-bags, with my different accoutrements enclosed, having been thrown across his back, I was lifted on. There was Kitty Gregg, a sort of general helper; and there was her mother, Nancy Gregg, who had nursed me when I was a baby; and there was Jem French, who had lived in the place before I was born. How they did fuss and put themselves about! 'Was I sitting comfortably? Shouldn't I tumble off? Had Jem got the biscuits and elder-wine all right? Why, the poor boy's trousers are already half way up his little legs!' What a journey

it was to send him! Three or four hours would it be before he would be there!' Jem French, you must know, was to go with me upon this formidable expedition, walking by the side of the donkey, and seeing that Master William came to no harm. At last we got away, and, all things considered, it was not a very easy journey for a boy not seven years old. It was a long ten miles of exceedingly bad and hilly road; and this, on the back of a slow-going donkey, was nothing like a joke. But in due time we reached Culmstock, where I was received with great affection by my grandmother, and in very schoolmaster style by Mr. Thomas. From the first I disliked the man intensely. His sternness repelled me. The harshness of his voice and the severity of his manner made me afraid.

"By my grandmother I was treated with greatest tenderness. Out of school hours, for the first few months, I was almost always at her side. To her kindly and genial conversation I listened with delight—never more so than when she would take down the 'Pilgrim's Progress' and explain it as we were reading on. She used to help me by seeing that I had committed my tasks to memory for the schoolroom, and that I understood a little what I had to learn. Thus my residence at Culmstock became a little more agreeable, and, upon the whole, I made progress in the meagre instruction which Mr. Thomas supplied. I enjoyed my half holidays exceedingly, for they were generally spent at Benshayne, where Uncle Richard Thomas gladdened

everything about him with his honest and hearty smile."

Another experiment followed, which stood still more in need of the mitigation of home affections:—

"In the town of Honiton there is an endowed grammar school, the master of which is required to educate four sons of respectable townsmen gratuitously. No advantage had been taken of this privilege for many years, and it was passing practically out of sight. Some friends of my mother's suggested to her that she should claim the privilege for me. It was discussed, and the upshot was, that the claim was made and granted. I was to become a scholar whenever I chose, after I had attained my eighth year: I was not eligible till then. Had the matter been better understood, I believe my mother would never have thus arranged for the education of her eldest boy. The school at that time was under the care of a clergyman, who was a notoriously severe master, addicted to modes of punishment and to amounts of punishment scarcely known now even in our workhouses or gaols.

"There were seventy boys in the school, and they were all boarders there, being the sons of the smaller gentry and clergy from different parts of Devonshire and from other places. There was not a single element in the school with which I could sympathise; not a habit or a predilection that was at all likely to assimilate with me. It was thoroughly aristocratical and high church Not a boy either was there amongst them all, under

twelve or thirteen years of age. Several were sixteen or eighteen—great fellows, six feet high. Any worse place for me could scarcely have been found. It was a great mistake.

"February the 14th, 1815, arrived, and I was eligible. My stay at Culmstock had finished with the Christmas of 1814. I had been at home ever since. One day I was taken by my mother to the head master to receive his directions for the future. He received us formally, and told me that the school began at six o'clock winter and summer, at which hour I must appear punctually on pain of a birching; that at eight I should be sent home to breakfast, to return at nine. From nine to twelve I must be at my work in the schoolroom; two hours would be given for dinner; at two I was to present myself again and remain until five; at six I should be expected at evening school, which continued until half-past eight.

"A tolerable process this, every day, for one so young as I was—for one, too, who had never heard a Latin word pronounced, and would not have understood it if he had. What a relief it was when the reverend, the master, concluded by saying that I was not to come until Lady-day!"

Why so soon after Lady-day as "April 5th" the child should have been introduced to Cæsar and expected to find his way in Virgil, must remain an unsolved problem. Yet this is the date, and that the burden of the first of all his extant letters. It is written in a bold, distinct hand, and is addressed to an unnamed "Dear

cousin," who has sympathised with the mother's and the son's difficulties.

"I received," he says, with the amplitude of loving expression which he never lost, "your kind and friendly letter last Friday evening, and am much obliged to you for your good advice, which I hope to attend to." Then follow the names of the indispensable authors, with a request for the second, which, though couched in an imperfect sentence, sufficiently presents the requirement of the crisis:—

"I take it very kind for your offering to get me a Cæsar, but I was obliged to get one last week. If you would have the goodness to send me Virgil by the first opportunity, as I expect I shall want it before the end of the week. Mother," he adds, "desires me to say that she shall be very glad to see you at Honiton. Please to give my duty to uncle and aunt. I remain, yours affectionately, William Brock."

The entrance of the eight year old scholar upon the field of action must have been even more trying than his apprehensions had pictured:—

"At length the time arrived, and long before six o'clock I was shivering and trembling at the gate. The clock struck, and amidst a crowd of boys rushing from their bedrooms, I got into the schoolroom. The desks were around the room, and the seats fastened to the walls, the middle of the room being left empty for the perambulations of the master, and for other purposes which, to my sorrow, I afterwards ascertained. 'You are to

sit there, you little Brock, always,' said a thin, scraggy sort of voice to me, the said voice belonging most suitably to a starveling of 'an usher,' whose business it was to teach the young gentlemen how to write and do sums. The place appointed for me to occupy always was the lowest in the room, very near the aforesaid usher, who was told to consider me in his charge.

"From him I ventured to ask a few questions about my lessons. The man was kind, and I was somewhat cheered at the idea that I was to go up to him when I was ready. Foolish and unhappy boy! Every lesson was to be repeated or said by a particular time to the master himself. So make up your mind to the worst! It was very bad. No help was given me of any kind. There was literally no teaching. If I got through a sentence or two in translation without any monstrous mistakes, I was not punished; if I did mistake, there was no mercy. Sometimes it was—'Strip, sir, that you may be birched.' At other times it was—'Go, kneel in the middle of the room, and hold this book out at arm's length.' At other times it was a fierce seizure of both my ears, or a savage grip at my throat, with as much shaking or dragging up and down the room as the prevailing burst of inhumanity inspired.

"To make matters worse, a set of boys determined to resent the intrusion of 'a beggar' upon the school. They were gentlemen. Who was I? It was arranged to hunt me from the schoolroom door across the playground to the outer gate. My only chance was to be

out first, which my position favoured, and to be off like an arrow. I came in for it with all my precaution very often, and merciless kicks or blows were the result. Within the schoolroom I was the general butt—a sort of victim upon whom the juvenile gentility of the establishment was at liberty to wreak its reckless and brutal spite! You can have no idea of the sort of feeling which prevailed at that time against tradespeople, specially if they were Dissenters, on the part of the squirearchy and the clergy. It was a mixture of hatred and contempt.

"It was hard to bear one way and another; but I did my best, and somehow I got on. Not a word of English literature was taught in any shape. It was all Latin and Greek, with about half a day a week for writing and the first rules of arithmetic.

"Just as it was at Culmstock, I got into the way of making out my lessons after a fashion, and really without any help. 'Black Dick,' as the master was profanely designated, never gave me an atom of instruction. Of my schoolfellows I dared not ask any. The poor old usher could give me none. I guessed a great deal, and took my chance of not having to go on in class, and now and then picked up a suggestion at the moment; but as for acquaintance with the elements and principles of the things in question, I had none. I was quick in committing to memory, and not very dull in conjecturing probabilities, and quite up to mediocrity in retaining what I acquired, and somewhat diligent, I believe, when

I saw what I had to do. There, however, the matter ended, so far as the grammar school was concerned in my education. If it encouraged me in these respects, it did nothing more. It laid no foundation for the future. It excited no ambition after knowledge. It neither furnished me with information nor put me in the way of obtaining it."

This description will be perfectly credible to every one who knows how many such grammar schools were conducted, up to a much more recent period than sixty years ago. When Dr. Mackarness, the present Bishop of Oxford, was rector of Honiton, he is understood to have done much to bring this particular institution into harmony with modern methods of education; but there is little reason to believe that even yet the antipathies arising from creed and social position have been diminished. A happier time, however, was elsewhere at hand for our young scholar, as he shall further tell:—

"More than three years and a half had passed away in the drudgery and discomfort of my gratuitous education, when my mother became disposed to remove me, and place me somewhere else. Old Uncle Daniel had recently died, at the advanced age of eighty-two, leaving me a small legacy, of which my mother was to have the use till I was twenty-one. With the interest of this bequest she thought she could manage to put me to Mr. Trenow's school for a few months, at least. Mr. Trenow's was not a classical but an English school; and

as I was so ignorant of ordinary English things, it was deemed desirable that I should become his pupil. To my unutterable delight I heard that I was to leave Lewis's at Christmas 1818. What a shouting there was! What holidays those Christmas holidays were! They were spent, as I well remember, at Benshayne, with my cousins and my jolly Uncle Richard! I was as merry as a lark. Not only had I escaped from a tyrant in my schoolmaster, and from a set of bullies in my schoolfellows, but I should now be able to learn something. There was a chance for me at last.

"The experiment succeeded admirably. I took to my school-work cheerfully. From an assistant of Mr. Trenow's, Mr. Woodgate, I derived most effective help as I did indeed from the principal himself. Nothing came much amiss to me, and when midsummer arrived I was found mentioned with considerable praise. My mother was overjoyed, and in her joyfulness another scheme occurred to her. There was, for that day, a very select school at Bradninch, kept by the Baptist minister, the Rev. Charles Sharp. If her boy could but go there for a few months!"

It was accomplished. What will not love do?

"At Michaelmas I was sent. The result answered my mother's expectation. My new tutor was a most attractive and somewhat commanding person. His wife was charming. My schoolfellows were friendly and well behaved. All the arrangements of the house were admirable. To a fine old pear-tree, I have an

attachment to this hour! Never had education been to me what it was then. I delighted in it. I was always at it. I got to see what it meant. If I was in difficulty, I had a kindly instructor who would always help me. If I mistook, I was effectively and permanently set right. I was on my way to a sound acquaintance with practical and common things.

"Alas! there was to be an end of all these advantages at Christmas. No more expenditure could be afforded. I left Bradninch, at the termination of the quarter, with a heavy heart, feeling, what I have never ceased to feel, that I was immensely indebted both to Mr. and Mrs. Sharp."

Chapter Third.

"From thee, my birth; through thee, my second birth;
Twice Mother to me—showing heaven on earth,
That, here and there, I might thy praise
In song still grateful raise."

—*George Herbert.*

WILLIAM BROCK, like George Herbert, lost his father when he was four years old; but when he was supplied with another at thirteen, he did not receive the gift so meekly as, with equally unbounded admiration of his mother, the poet did his corresponding acquisition at sixteen.

As soon as the outspoken Honiton boy discerned the object of a certain frequent visitor to the home to which he had just returned, he exclaimed against the imminent event so ardently that his mother could not soothe him; and there appeared to be no remedy but that of hastening an arrangement which might very well have been postponed for another year. He must begin the business of life at once; and two three weeks accordingly, before the marriage, he was conducted over the hills to Sidmouth. It was a sharp trial to his affectionate nature to have the new relationship formed at all, and a special grief that he had made it impossible that he

should be present at its initiation. The sorrows which arise from natural temperament begin their long succession early in life, but happily there was in this instance a ready balm for them in maternal love.

"A letter reached me from my precious mother assuring me that I should find things better than I feared, and bidding me come home for a few days, and make the best of it, before I settled down to my apprenticeship. Our interview came off, and the result was good. Things began to brighten; and although I never altered my opinion as to my mother's superiority, both intellectually and socially, yet I came to hold her husband in affectionate esteem. He outlived her many years, and died in the faith of Christ. I may note that he often spoke to me of her superiority, availing himself of opportunities which occurred for referring to the excellencies which he so much admired."

This domestic sorrow subsided almost as quickly as it had arisen; but he had now to fight with a sea of troubles, from which there was to be no escape until his character had been transformed, and his powers disciplined for services of which he had, at the time, no foresight. Of the circumstances of this important era of his life, he has left a pretty full narrative in the following interesting letter to his younger son:—

"My apprenticeship began in September 1820, committing me to a servitude of seven years. I was to be taught the art and mystery of watchmaking; to

be boarded and lodged with the family for the entire period, and to be allowed a few days' holiday every year. In return, a certain premium was to be paid for me, and I was to give all my services without any pecuniary remuneration until the apprenticeship expired. It was veritable bondage for the apprentice, but it was in keeping with the custom of the times.

"I had been forced, as a schoolboy, to rough it—roughing was still to be my lot, and such roughing, that I remember it almost with dismay. My master was illiterate and profane. His wife was ill-favoured, ill-bred, ill-mannered, and ill-disposed; a wrangler with her husband, and with all who came within her reach. My fellow-apprentices were ignorant, boisterous, and debased, knowing nothing more about literature or religion than the beasts which perish. Until I entered the house, I do not believe there was a book within its walls. Whatever talk there was, either in the shop or at the table, never rose above vulgar twaddle. The domestic arrangements were beggarly and bad. Neither food nor beverage was tolerable in quality or sufficient in amount. I had to sleep on the stairhead for years. Of the commonest conveniences there were hardly any; of the ordinary comforts there were none at all. The material and the moral wretchedness of the place was complete. It troubles me to remember it. I have not overcharged my representation in the least.

"For a while it was more than I could bear. To my mother I wrote piteous complaints. She sent me the

means to buy some necessary food; and once she interfered. By degrees, however, I became inured to the domestic hardships; and things which I could not help, I tried to bear as best I could. As I remember, unto this day, it was trying to bear it, but the discipline, I dare say, did me good.

"By the moral wretchedness which surrounded me, I was especially distressed. When Sunday came, I found that neither Mr. nor Mrs. B. was going to church. Mr. B. was going to the belfry to chime the people into church, but he was afterwards coming home again. This I found to be the general rule. In no way whatever was there any recognition of God. It had been arranged that I should attend the services in the Independent Chapel, the only place in the town with whose minister or congregation my mother had any acquaintance. Mr. Ward was then the minister—a good minister of Jesus Christ. I went on the first Sunday, both morning and evening, spending the intervals of service in the way that I knew my mother would approve. The next morning I was christened, as they told me, 'Parson Brock,' a designation, by the by, which adhered to me all through my Sidmouth life. Banter and chaff I might have borne easily enough, but it turned out that banter and chaff were to be by no means all. Mr. B. distinctly attempted to annul the arrangement for my going to chapel. 'He wouldn't have any of the saints about his place;' and then he swore. My fellow-apprentices joined in the

swearing and in its denouncings. 'Trust them for making the place too hot to hold me, unless I would give my religion up!' Correspondence a little mended matters, and, so far as violence went, I was to be let alone. One thing, however, was carried out, and that was the determination that I should have none of my reading and praying, either in getting up or in going to bed. I was warned never to try that again; but as I did not exactly see any reason why I should not, I just did what I had been wont to do before getting into bed that night. Away came S.'s shoe from his hand to my head, with an emphatic warning that, as often as I said my prayers like that, so often the shoe would be flung; and the harder it hit me, the better should he be pleased. On considering the matter, I concluded that I might read and pray elsewhere—no particular virtue attaching, as I gathered, either to a given place or to a specific time. It was one of my earliest exercises in practical casuistry, and having *made known to my persecutor* that I meant to do so, I thenceforward adopted another method of acknowledging and worshipping God. I see the spot now, a little way up the cliff on the Salcombe side of Sidmouth, where I have offered up, times and often, my praises and my prayers. Whether for the matins or the vespers, it was equally a pleasant place. I have a notion that I pointed out the place to your brother William when we were at Sidmouth by ourselves some years ago.

"The congregation at the chapel was very small, but

there was a good Sunday-school. After a while some of the teachers spoke to me, and at length I was asked to take the 'Alphabet Class.' That was the designation of the class, and a very proper one; for to learn the alphabet was the object for which the children came to the Sunday-school. I accepted the invitation, and very soon found pleasure in my work. One way and another, my Sundays became wonderful reliefs to me in the midst of my manifold general discomforts. I was getting to love the habitation of God's house on account of the personal advantages which it brought to me from week to week. To Mr. Ward the minister I looked up with admiration, and to my fellow-teachers I became congenially attached. Some of the older ones knew pretty well the character of Mr. B.'s establishment, and they advised and comforted me accordingly. One very good man, whom I remember, William Barnes, a journeyman bricklayer, assured me that, if I could only keep along patient in well-doing, I should at last 'put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.'

"Time went on, and my general respect for religious persons and religious things increased; but I was not conscious of any personal attachment to Christ, neither was I anxious on the subject, so as to be at all concerned. I was not at all moved to confess Christ before men, in the way of joining myself to the Church; and yet, against all the efforts to weaken my attachment to the chapel, I resolutely held my own. Had the efforts been of another kind, they might have

succeeded; as it was, they failed. Plausible and captivating ungodliness might have gained me. By vicious and violent ungodliness, I was repelled.

"I received a good deal of help in right directions through a weekly visit which I had undertaken to pay to William Jeffreys, a poor bedridden blind man, who served and loved the Lord. I used to read some Scripture, which he would explain according to his ability, and then he prayed. It was not long before he led me into conversation about the Scripture which I had read; and then it was not long before I prayed according to his desire. The poor fellow always welcomed my visits so gratefully, and conversed with such intelligent and loving cheerfulness, that I was delighted to go to him. He won my confidence entirely, and proved that he deserved it. He 'expounded to me the way of the Lord more perfectly.' Where he thought that I was presumptuous, he corrected me; and when he saw that I was afraid, he bade me be of good cheer. Over many an obstacle did he take me safely, and from mistakes of more kinds than one did he hold me back. Not at all too much is it to say that, in that dark, comfortless back-room of my paralytic friend at Sidmouth, I took some of my first lessons in the girding up of loins, in the putting on of armour, in the laying hold upon eternal life, in the setting of my seal to it that God is true. William Jeffreys and I have pleasant conversation awaiting us in the paradise of God!

"By degrees I became known to different members of the congregation, and to their families. Intercourse was thus brought within my reach, and I gladly took such advantage of it as my circumstances allowed. Books were lent to me, and magazines—"The Evangelical Magazine" in particular, which became to me an occasion of most genuine delight. I continued, too, to get sight of a newspaper every Saturday evening.

"One day a bookhawker, whose name was Hill, who came to Sidmouth once a month, so plied me with his persuasions, that I began to take in "The Imperial Magazine," at the ruinous charge of a shilling a month. Somehow, the money was regularly forthcoming, with a little every now and then over and above. The surplus always went towards some book which the indefatigable pedlar was sure to have at hand, the very book which he had been thinking of for me.

"Thus, one way and another, I was rising head and shoulders above my master and my companions in the knowledge of common things, and on that account I was sworn at as much as ever: I was still beyond any doubt the object of dislike, but I had the upper hand, and my position was a good deal improved. To be denounced as 'Parson Brock' annoyed me; but I had my reward.

"Sidmouth was often visited by Christian ministers during the summer months for their relaxation, and now and then we had their services at the chapel. Well do I remember the Rev. Matthew Wilks, the

Rev. James Stratten, the Rev. James Hoby, and several others. I have notes which I took of the sermons they preached during their stay in 1824 and 1825. Our great ministerial visitor, however, was the Rev. John Angell James, of Birmingham. The mother of Mrs. James resided in the town; and her daughter and her husband came down to see her every year. I can hardly convey to you an idea of the excitement of the neighbourhood when it was known that Mr. James was going to preach. The little chapel was crammed to its entire capacity of accommodation; and when the windows could be thrown open, scores listened outside. If he preached in the week, it was very much the same. The sermons told powerfully on me, and served, I have no doubt, to move me further towards Christ: one sermon in particular from the text—'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?'

"I perpetrated an act, on the occasion of one visit of Mr. James's, of which I presume I ought to be somewhat ashamed. I was accustomed to sit in the gallery, immediately behind the chapel clock. To the pendulum of the said clock I had access from where I sat; so it occurred to me, in the prospect of an evening sermon, that I would lay my hand upon the pendulum for a minute or two; then set it agoing; then lay my hand upon it for two or three minutes more; and so on—prolonging the three-quarters of an hour for the sermon into an hour and a quarter, more or less. I was actually

audacious enough to do this, so that nobody would think that the clock had stopped—the stopping as I managed it being intermittent, not continuous or complete. It was a glorious sermon, from the text—'Great peace have they that love Thy law.' I vastly enjoyed the prolongation of the discourse which my artifice had secured, and was leaving off complacently at the end of about an hour and ten minutes, when Mr. James pulled out his watch, and apologised for having detained his auditory so long.

"It happened that in 1848 I met Mr. James at dinner at Mr. Joseph Sturge's; and thinking the opportunity a good one, I made the statement and the confession of my offence. He very well remembered the incident of the long sermon, and gave me his absolution: Joseph Sturge quietly asking me if I thought that was doing unto Angell James as I should have Angell James do unto me?"

This stern servitude at last came honourably to a close. The indentures, enfolding a five pound note, were surrendered and the bondsman was at liberty. Propositions were made to him to continue in the business and to share its profits; but although he had gradually won for himself marked respect, and had even softened the harsh natures and manners of the family, he was not to be persuaded to prolong his stay within that horizon. He had acquired glimpses of the world beyond, as well as a sense of power which craved some fitting sphere for its exercise. The only perfectly distinct

object before him was improvement in the art to which he had given so many years, and in which there was every probability of his reaching eminence; but surrounding that object there were the outlines of things which he could hardly name, and which were only occasionally discernible as the mists of futurity rose and fell. He determined, at all events, to try whether he could find a path into the unknown region; and inserting an advertisement in his favourite periodical, then the grand channel of communication, he received a reply in five days, offering a situation at Hertford which appeared suitable to his purpose.

When this became known, both his master and his mother besought him not to make the venture; but he was resolute; and having lived in it from September 1820 till March 1828, he bade farewell to Sidmouth.

In a letter, dated "Norwich, October 16, 1844," addressed to a valued member of his congregation, then travelling in Devon, he thus, after an interval of nearly a quarter of a century, characterises this chapter of his life:

"To you it will not be uninteresting to know that it was in that town I was brought to know and to love Jesus Christ. If you see the Marsh Chapel you will see the place where first I saw my Redeemer's glory and first opened my lips in public prayer. Oh! my dear friend, my heart is full when I think of Sidmouth. I went there a poor fatherless boy at thirteen years of age, with no friends in the world but a precious mother,

who consigned me, from necessity, to as wicked a man as ever lived, that I might learn to earn my bread. My companions were among the ungodliest I ever knew. My employer had no sympathy with a boy who really trembled at the oaths which he constantly heard. I was, without any exaggeration, without a single comfort of any earthly kind.

"There is a place far up on the side of the cliff, immediately eastward of the mouth of the little river, whither I have often gone to pray to God to keep me and bless me. It is a sacred spot to me! God heard my prayers; raised me up friends; preserved me from evil; made my despisers esteem me; and conducted me to the end of an eight years' apprenticeship, so that I left the town with the kindly feeling of a goodly number on my behalf. I have preached once there; and truly it was a pleasant sight to behold the little place full of well-known faces apparently glad to welcome the watchmaker's apprentice."

Chapter Fourth.

"So did he travel on life's common way
In cheerful lowliness; and yet his heart
The 'mightiest' duties on itself did lay."
—*Wordsworth.*

FEW holidays had enlivened the toil of the last eight years; and the pause of three weeks which occurred at their close brought great satisfaction to the family at Honiton. The mother welcomed her son to his old home, and accompanied him to their relatives in the manse at Culmstock, observing with unconcealed gratitude how the discipline of life and the influence of true religion had developed his character, and, without quenching his humour and high spirits, had imparted manliness and deference to his bearing. She was not likely, however, to be able to divest herself of anxiety in the prospect of the wide, and as it seemed permanent, separation which every day brought nearer. London is a place full of terrible risks in the eyes of a mother accustomed to a secluded life. Without perceiving that the magnitude of the population may actually lessen the force of some temptations which prove fatal in small communities, it appears to her to intensify all

perils a thousandfold. But although her expressions of solicitude, uttered with bated breath, looked at the time to this eager adventurer somewhat superfluous, he afterwards came to know their value and to discover that they had not been without a certain restraining power.

"Reverence for my mother's anxieties!" he exclaimed, "though they were a little overcharged, who knows what I owe to them? Watchfulness I have no doubt was awakened on my part; and 'grace to help in time of need' was vouchsafed in answer to her prayers."

The day, dreaded and desired, at length came. The guard's horn announced to all the inhabitants of the long street that the "Celerity" on its way from Exeter to London had crossed the bridge which spans the Otter in the valley. The young man's box, duly corded and addressed, was already at the front door of the "Angel." One pocket was no doubt occupied with the sixpences which were to be given to the successive drivers, and the other would contain the half-crown destined to requite the guard when he had completed the journey. Tears stood in so many eyes, that it is easy to imagine how the affectionate heart longed for the moment when a leap to the top of the coach, followed by the simultaneous start of the fresh horses, would bring relief. But alas!—sorrow so little known at the present day—there was no room for the new passenger, and twelve hours must elapse before another "Celerity" would bring another chance. At eight o'clock in the evening

it made its appearance; and one place being found next the guard, our traveller passed the April night by his side, revolving the past and the possible, and entering the city in which he was afterwards to be known so widely about four o'clock next afternoon. On alighting at the old coach office in Piccadilly Circus—"To my great delight," he wrote, "my cousin Jerom Murch* was waiting for me. He had heard that I was coming by the previous coach and had come to meet me on its arrival. Nothing daunted by the disappointment, he had come again, and by his true kindliness of voice and manner I was vastly cheered."

Even this was not his only welcome to the strange city. His mother's second sister, then a widow, and afterwards wife of the Rev. Edward Lewis, pastor of the Baptist Church at Highgate, of whom we shall hear more presently, was not far off; and within a day or two of his arrival he set off to find her by way of Tottenham Court Road, Hampstead Road, and Kentish Town, "a fair half of the walk" reminding him of Devon, with hedges and ditches and brambles and green fields on either side; and what was better—"I was," says he, "affectionately welcomed; and several arrangements were forthwith settled for making the best of the little time I had to stay."

* At present the Mayor of Bath, and author of "A History of the Presbyterian and General Baptist Churches in the West of England," —London, 1835—from which several particulars respecting the Honiton Churches in this Memoir are derived.

The situation at Hertford had at last to be encountered. It was with considerable trepidation, arising in part from the Sidmouth experience, that its duties were approached. The master, however, proved to be not unkind; and the occupation, although absorbing thirteen hours of every day, leaving a few remnants for social intercourse in addition to the whole of every Sunday. The ministry on which he first waited was not attractive, but he at once devoted his energies to the Sunday-school and gave scope to his religious sympathies. On the occurrence of a change or rather a succession of changes in the pastorate, accompanied by what he considered a decay of the power of godliness among the people, he began to attend the ministry of the Rev. J. Anthony, the pastor of the Independent Church, whom he highly esteemed and by whose instructions he grew in intelligence, and was insensibly impelled in the direction of his true work.

His chief counsellor, however, at this critical passage of his life was one in lowly condition: the second he had already found in that noble, though obscure, class, to which the world is more indebted than it knows.

"Amongst the Baptist folk was a Mr. Nicholas, an oldish person, living in a decent house with his two children and a confidential servant. He was a small dealer in lace and fine goods, going through a round of neighbouring villages and hamlets, carrying his wares in a pack on his back. His plan was to leave

Hertford on Tuesday mornings, and get home on Friday evenings. His Sundays were given regularly to a congregation at Collier's End, a village about six miles from Hertford. Week after week for several years did he walk to and fro to preach to about thirty or forty villagers, receiving nothing whatever in the way of money remuneration.

"It happened that he took some fancy to me, informing me that somehow he could make a sermon more easily after a good Friday night's crack with me. One day he came out with the proposal that I should come and lodge with him. The house was commodious, his children were very fond of me, the old servant Harriott would be attentive, and then we should have better opportunity for the intercourse which we both enjoyed. I acquiesced. The change was altogether to my comfort. My board and lodging were alike benefited. Had my mother looked in upon me now, she would, in goodly measure, have been content. Our talks came off to admiration. Rarely had intercourse been more pleasant than that which thus commenced between the pedlar and the artizan. For the first time I got hold of Gurnall's 'Christian Armour,' Booth's 'Reign of Grace,' Boston's 'Fourfold State,' and several of the works of Andrew Fuller. I fairly went in for them, becoming, in my way, as great a theological devotee as I have ever met. It was very much a new life to me altogether, and it was life! I delighted to read the statement of a theological case,

then to follow out the proof by which it was made good; and then to give heed to the results and consequences which were said, directly or indirectly, to ensue. Not unfrequently I found myself embarrassed. More than once I was perplexed, exactly as I have found many a young man in my Bible classes perplexed since. The vexed questions incident to our humanity plagued me more than I can tell. I had to struggle and to fight, but I liked it greatly; and when Friday night came, with Mr. Nicholas in his proper place, and me in mine, I made him a party to the fight. Sometimes a Unitarian difficulty started our discussion, at other times a supralapsarian difficulty, at other times an Arminian difficulty. The little man had to warn me against presumptuousness, in respect to some of my inquiries; making devout, and most proper use of the fact, that it is not for man to comprehend God."

It was somewhat remarkable, that he had slipped on to the twenty-second year of his age without having made a profession of his faith in baptism, or participated in the supper of the Lord. This was no doubt, in part, accounted for by the state of the Baptist churches, both at Sidmouth and Hertford, having been such as to repel serious young persons from their communion. The friendship and counsels of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis contributed much to the removal of this difficulty. It was resolved under their advice that, without determining the question of

church membership, the solemn duty of baptism should be at once observed. Accordingly, "I was," says his note on the subject, "baptized at Highgate in April 1829; Mr. Lewis accepting my profession of faith, burying me with Christ in baptism, and raising me up again to newness of life."

The natural effect of this decision was a more direct progress in the way which, through his friend's quiet help, was now broadening before him.

"About the time of my baptism, I began to go occasionally with Mr. Nicholas when he went to preach at Collier's End. This brought us into yet closer fellowship, and we became, very efficiently, the bearers of each other's burdens, and the helpers of each other's joys. One Sunday he asked me to read and pray. Though the place would not hold more than forty, and all were very poor, I shrank from doing it. If he would excuse me then, I said I would try some other time. Before long he renewed his request, and I complied. Presently there came another request: 'Would I not preach some day soon?' Very decisive was my answer, and it was as honest as it was decisive. The proposal both startled and distressed me. I felt that to entertain it, even for an hour, would be wrong. Mr. Nicholas was very kind, and very wise withal. He did not bore me at all; but he kept the subject well before my mind, getting some persons who thought the same as he thought to talk with me as opportunities arose.

"Under the pressure which was thus brought to bear

upon me, I mused and prayed much, not wishing to run counter to the wishes of my friends, without being able to tell them why.

"The consequence was that I determined to see whether I could write a sermon. Not a soul was privy to the effort, either at its beginning, or through its continuance, or at its close. The text that I selected was—'There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother,' and the sermon was made up of descriptions of the friendship of Jesus Christ. Several times did I read it through, finding occasion for alteration and improvement every time. But the sermon had not been preached! To write a paper about the friendship of Christ was one thing; to address a congregation so as to affect people's hearts and minds with the love of Christ was a very different thing. However, as the two things were not essentially incompatible, it might turn out that I could, in some way and manner of my own, do both.

"Mr. Nicholas became seriously unwell; and to go and do his Sunday work was not unfrequently beyond his power. It was difficult for him to find a substitute, so that he had sometimes to go when I knew that he ought to have remained at home. Under these circumstances I one day proffered my services for the next Sunday morning. The old gentleman thanked God for his indisposition, affirming his belief that God had laid affliction upon his loins in order to bring me out into the ministry of the Word. The occasion was one of

great interest to me; and I thought of the old Honiton text of being 'remembered by the Lord for good.'

"Mr. Nicholas was able to walk with me to Collier's End when Sunday came, and to take the morning sermon. At half-past two I entered the little pulpit to conduct the service entirely; having, I remember, a strong wish to be my own suppliant for grace to help me in this time of need. I felt that it would be a relief to me to pour out my heart before the Lord; and I felt, moreover, that the people's hearts might blend and sympathise with mine, as by prayers and supplications with thanksgivings I was making known our common requests unto God.

"The service gave pleasure to the people obviously; and in their simple way they expressed their hope that I should come and preach to them again. As we were walking home, Mr. Nicholas came into serious conversation with me on the subject of the Christian ministry as the calling of my life. His former impressions, he assured me, had been thoroughly confirmed by my sermon; no doubt, indeed, had he now that I was called of God unto the work. All this, however, seemed to me to be premature; and though my friend plied me persistently with his entreaties, I ventured to think that he was wrong. A strong point with him was that I had found pleasure and profit in the one service which I had undertaken. I admitted both the pleasure and the profit; but I dared not at once infer that I was chosen of God to be a minister of the Word.

It vexed him much, but I was firm, and as conscientious and intelligent as I was firm. That I might now and then preach a sermon with advantage, I believed; that I should undertake to preach sermons continually, and become a pastor, I did not believe.

"Before very long I had a serious illness which confined me to my room. Musings of various kinds occupied me in my solitude, and some of these musings were about the ministry. I prayed as well as mused, and the result was that I came to agree with my friend, so far at least as to determine that I would go to Collier's End a few times in succession; awaiting the issue, and leaving it with God."

The voice secretly summoning his spirit to this service, became at length so distinctly audible, that he now ventured to reveal his thoughts to his most trusted friends: to his mother first, who was delighted above measure, and then to Mr. Lewis, who, not surprised by the communication, proceeded at once to arrange a series of simple religious services, at which the gifts of his young friend might become known and tested.

The result was so gratifying to the excellent pastor, that he proposed an immediate visit to the President of Stepney College, the Rev. W. H. (afterwards Dr.) Murch, who being a native of Honiton, and a companion and kinsman of William Brock the elder, might be expected to take an especial interest in the present application. Dr. Murch was a shrewd judge

of human nature, and pierced, or seemed to pierce, at the first glance, into the innermost being of the men who stood in his presence. But he used few words, and not even these without reflection. It cannot be doubted that from what he saw in his rustic townsman, joined with what he had heard of his attempts at Hertford and Highgate, his mind was made up on the point of his reception into the college; but he cautiously advised a little longer continuance in village evangelism, and drew attention to the rule that application must be preceded by church membership, sanctioned by a vote of the church, and supported by the recommendation of two ordained ministers.

All these conditions were at length duly observed. The church at Highgate did its part cordially; two neighbouring ministers joined in its recommendation, and the villagers of Collier's End, who had been the first to appreciate and encourage a ministry destined to a wider auditory, heard with deep interest, not unmixed with regrets, its parting counsels.

"I sought admission to Stepney in the usual manner, and all preliminary inquiries having been satisfactorily answered I was directed to appear before the committee on a particular evening in February 1830; there and then to submit to such viva-voce examination as might be deemed desirable, and furthermore, and especially, to preach a short sermon, addressing the committee as though they were my congregation, and regarding the committee room as a place of

worship. I bethought myself of my old sermon on the friendship of Christ, and proceeded to abbreviate as well as to improve it for the occasion.

"The memorable evening came, and at the time appointed I walked into a dingy, desolate house in Fen Court, Fenchurch Street, which was at that time the centre of our various denominational operations. The room which I was ushered into was shut off from another room by heavy folding doors, on the other side of which I heard voices which suggested the Committee. Beginning to prepare myself for the impending ordeal, I saw another youth quietly seated in a corner of the room, keeping himself apparently very much to himself. He turned out to be a candidate like myself, and awaiting a similar ordeal. We exchanged a few words of mutual encouragement and comfort, and then subsided into quietness on both sides.

"Presently those lumbering folding-doors opened, and a voice called for 'Charles James Middleditch. In walked my companion and the doors were closed. I could not hear what was said; but that the conversation was a lively one was very clear. There came a short interval of silence, and then Mr. Middleditch's voice became audible enough as a preacher of the Word. The number present did not exceed a dozen, and each of them was either a deacon or a pastor; but there was my friend going on just as I found him going on many times thereafter, amidst out-door gatherings in the Minories and Rag Fair.

"All at once I heard an ominous voice say something which brought the preaching abruptly to an end. The fact was that the Committee had satisfied themselves that Mr. Middleditch had the gift of public speaking, and with that they were satisfied.

"When I was summoned, (I remember the group very well), I took my seat at the table by the side of Mr. Gutteridge, and Mr. W. B. Gurney. Faithful, as I have no doubt they were, to their responsibilities, they were very kind to me. I daresay that I owed a good deal to the friendship of Mr. Murch, who was present as the President of the College, and who had prepossessed the Committee in my favour. The talk with me was very general, and very much to the purpose, relating principally to my conversion and my consecration to Christ. By and by the Chairman desired me to stand at the end of the table and deliver my sermon, saying that I was not to exceed a quarter of an hour, or they should have to stop me before I reached the close. Far more self-possessed was I than I had expected. Out came the text, 'There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother,' and on went the sermon fluently, and pleasantly, until my deliverance was complete, peroration and all! The request was made to me to withdraw. After a little while I was recalled and assured by the Chairman of a hearty welcome to all the benefits of the Institution. Mr. Middleditch and myself had been informed beforehand that, in case we should be accepted that

evening, accommodation would be ready for us at the College on Stepney Green immediately. No sooner, therefore, were the proceedings at Fen Court well over, than we walked away to Stepney, certainly two of the happiest men alive.

"And yet we might have been profoundly grave. It was a simple thing enough to exchange one occupation for another. An agreeable thing, moreover, was it that the exchange which we were making was of such a kind as to raise us in the scale of intelligence and usefulness. But what as to the responsibilities which we were deliberately incurring? What as to our holding fast our profession amidst the vicissitudes of the future? What, when the college course was finished? Would the churches care to have our services? and should they peradventure seek them, would they be of any substantial worth? Our forthcoming preparation for the ministry might well inspire us with gladness and satisfaction. But there, looming in the future, was the ministry itself in unknown places, amidst strange persons, under untried circumstances, through longer, or through shorter periods, at home or in foreign lands. I verily believe that had I been adequately affected by the whole matter, even as I might have apprehended it then, I should never have gone to Stepney after all. It strikes me with awe at this hour that I should have undertaken what I have found to be so veritably the burden of the Lord. A vision of my Norwich life, had I seen it at Fen Court,

would have led me to withdraw my application to the Committee on the spot. A vision of my Bloomsbury Chapel life, had I seen it as I passed that evening into my College chamber, would have sent me back to my bench at Mr. Field's, and to my occasional services to the rustics at Collier's End.

"However, no such visions did appear to me; and perhaps in mercy, the weightier ultimate responsibilities which were involved were hidden from my eyes. Enough, in the gracious providence of God, that I should apprehend and then address myself to those responsibilities which were at hand. When others followed in succession, no matter what they would involve, and no matter where they might occur, divine strength would be made perfect in my human weakness. I was to be a student now; let me learn, in whatsoever state I was, to be content.

"On reaching the College Mr. Middleditch and myself were treated with true friendliness by our fellow-students; and before we parted for the night we were considerably at our ease. The next morning we were introduced to Mrs. Murch, greatly to our comfort, because she was so motherly. Everything seemed to us to be contributing to our comfort, and with pure hearts fervently we thanked God and took courage."

Chapter Fifth.

"Of studie toke he most cure & hede,
Not a word spake he more than was nede;
Souning in [tending to] moral vertue was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche."

—CHAUCER, *Oxford Scholar.*

THE college committees of the present day have done well to adopt a method of ascertaining the elocutionary powers of candidates less appalling and more effectual than that of requiring them to deliver, to a solemn conclave, a composition affecting to be a discourse to a popular audience. But another usage has disappeared which might with much advantage have been continued. Young men of slender early advantages lose much in many ways by being thrown at once into the general system of college life. A tutor who is in a position to study closely the character of each man, so as to be able to dissuade some from the pursuit of the ministry as the sole calling in life, and to aid others in taking accurately the initial steps in learning, affording, at the same time, opportunities of improving the heart and manners by the intercourse of family life, is a treasure beyond price; and such a treasure these young men had now awaiting them.

There was at that time in Derby the pastor of a small

but intelligent church, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, and a man of great taste and judgment, who received into his house, which is described as having been "through his private means considerably above the ordinary ministerial style," detachments of students preparatory to their course in Stepney College. Five formed the circle on this occasion, and seldom has a companionship been more admirably composed. Not one resembled another, and each added something to the common weal. Charles James Middleditch with his calm judgment, William Payne with his fervid and generous spirit, the gentle and refined Cubitt, and the devoted missionary-student Griffiths—all now, after honourable lives, re-united above—largely contributed to each other's education and happiness.

"I soon found myself at home," wrote their warm-hearted comrade, "in our pleasant quarters at Derby, quite ready for any work which Mr. Hawkins might require me to undertake. We were at once informed of his plans for our studies: he intended to take us through a series of exercises in English, to instruct us in the Latin and Greek grammars, to acquaint us with Algebra, and to confer with us as opportunities should arise, on various matters preparatory to our study of theology. We might work together or separately in learning the lessons or in getting ready for examinations, but he would meet with us, as a rule, in class. The necessary books were at hand; suitable directions were given, and we were told to bring any difficulty which per-

plexed us to our tutor with the kindly assurance that his help was always at our service.

"On Saturdays we were to employ ourselves in sermonising, and that this might be done effectually, each of us, in our turn, was to prepare a discourse and to read it before Mr. Hawkins and all our fellows, in order to such criticisms as its excellencies or deficiencies might require.

"I entered upon this course with the truest pleasure, and my days were as happy as they were long. Mrs. Hawkins used her influence, which was most kindly, for the improvement of our manners, and Mr. Hawkins left nothing within his power undone for the improvement of our minds: 'the lines had fallen unto us in pleasant places!'" This judgment was confirmed at the close of the brief six months' term: "I left Derby more thankful than I was able to tell, to Mr. Hawkins as my tutor, my pastor, and my friend. He had evinced great wisdom, great patience, great faithfulness, and great Christian love. He had aimed to put me on the right course of study, to induce the right habits, and to inspire me with the right spirit. To the last hour of my life shall I thank God that I ever sat as a disciple at his feet."

The members of this "reading party," glowing with gratitude and comforted by the assurance that Mr. Hawkins would confirm the provisional decision of the committee, that they should be received to the full course at Stepney, dispersed to their several homes. Mr. Brock's month at Barnstaple, to which his mother

had removed her residence, was, however, saddened by the circumstance of his sister, to whom he was much attached, and who had come from Plymouth, expressly to meet him, taking ill, or rather becoming worse than she had been for some time before, and ere three weeks had elapsed, breathing her last. The divine goodness discernible in permitting that final meeting, and the admonition which the loss conveyed to him at that juncture, sent him onward with deepened earnestness to the duties awaiting him in London.

"The first of September 1830, being now near at hand, I prepared to leave for Stepney, where all the students were expected on that day. The separation from my mother was painful on many accounts, but we called to mind our former separation at Honiton, unfeignedly thanking God that He had remembered us so graciously for good then and confidently believing that He would so remember us again. By the day appointed I was within the college walls, ready for whatever duties might be assigned to me. The few books which I had brought with me were soon arranged, my desk was put in order, and the blessing from on high was invoked with some measure of the full assurance of faith."

The interesting old edifices which formed the College of Stepney were swept from the earth and replaced by a terrace of modern houses soon after the institution was removed in 1856 to Regent's Park. Their memory, therefore, has already begun to perish,

and it may perhaps be permitted to tell what figure they once presented to the eye, and what manner of work was done within their walls.

STEPNEY COLLEGE BEFORE ITS DEMOLITION IN 1856.

Their position was directly in front of the wooded grounds of the Rectory, which have since also vanished, and their own garden stretched as far on the opposite side as the wall of old "Stepney Meeting." The centre consisted of an ancient keep and gateway of deep-red brick, popularly known as "King John's Tower," and which the antiquaries believe to have been all that remained of a royal suburban lodge of the

days when Stebonheath, or Stepney, was the favourite resort of London citizens: the Regent's Park, in fact, of that time. Standing on either side were two capacious mansions of later date, one having been the property and dwelling of Dr. Matthew Mead, the Court physician, which were assigned as residences to the two chief tutors. Between the Tower and the eastern house a building had been admirably inserted, including above and below, the Refectory and the Library, from which a double-storied line of studies was projected at right angles into the garden. The imposing front which these combined structures presented, was farther extended about half a century ago by the erection of a neat Elizabethan chapel, which was open to the public, and supplied with preachers by the tutors and students of the college.

The interior was a place of hard work. A few might take their duties easily, but as a rule, the temptation was to over-application. It was seldom that one passed through that gateway without a definite object, and a profound appreciation of the opportunities presented for self-improvement. It was the impression, indeed, of the majority that in the view of their necessities, the time of study was too short. It is true that when that period was not prematurely ended by the importunity of churches, it bore a fair comparison in point of extent with what prevailed in other places of learning. The course of candidates for the ministry in the Presbyterian churches of Scotland, for example, extends over eight years: four devoted to

literature, and four to theology; but then their sessions last little longer than four months and a half in every year, while the Stepney course lasted nine months in each of its four years, bringing the time applied to study to precisely the same amount. The slower march over the ground, however, as those know who have taken part in both systems, brings great advantages. The mind has space for recovering its freshness, and making its acquisitions sure. The road which in one case presents itself in unbroken line until lost in the horizon, is, in the other, seen only for short distances, and varied by long intervals of woods and fields. It was formidable even to those whose school-life had not been fruitless, to be introduced at once, or in very close succession, to Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, with which in the later sessions were connected Chaldee and Syriac; to Arithmetic, Algebra, and Geometry, with unhappily not much Natural Science, but a good deal of Metaphysics and Logic, crowned by Church History, Pastoral Theology, and Divinity proper. Diffused over the whole period was the study of Homiletics, in the form of the preparation and public reading of discourses for criticism. There were also of course, on Sundays, engagements in such pulpits as the student might be counted fit to occupy; and these were fortunately of exceedingly varied character, rising from the cottage, the workhouse, the village chapel, the market-place, and the crowded street, up to the formal and well-instructed metropolitan congregation.

The most trying ordeal, perhaps, in the way of public ministration was that which fell upon each student in turn, after coming into the second year's residence, in the pulpit of the College Chapel. The presence of the tutors, a few of the students, and some intelligent people from the neighbourhood combined, with the over-high rostrum and the chill air of the little fane, to make it impossible for all but the most reckless orators to feel at home in their work. But an admirable counterpoise to the influence of this sphere of action was found in the open air and among the teeming multitudes of Whitechapel Road and Ratcliffe Highway which surged on either side. The academic buildings stood in no Cistercian valley or Trappist solitude, where the only sounds are those of the stream or the avalanche: a few minutes' walk, north or south, brought one to crowds deeply in need of evangelical instruction and by no means inaccessible to it. The scenes presented on the two great thoroughfares just named, in the early hours of spring and summer Sundays, were full of touching interest. The working men and their families who had passed the night in the confined dormitories of the streets, which lie like nets on either side of the main current, hastened to creep forth into air and daylight. The broad pathways, on fine mornings between seven and nine, were covered by people of both sexes and all ages in hastily-assumed clothing—the children playing, and the fathers and mothers making small purchases in provision shops, and at tables and rude stalls covered with all kinds of small edibles, from oysters and mussels

to elaborate fruit cakes and gilded confectionery. It was not at all difficult for a preacher, with fitting voice and manner, to surround himself with a ring of these saunterers: and the eye might often count, at various intervals along a large part of two miles, a goodly number of auditories differing in size and cohesion according to the speaker's powers; for the people, of course, like bees, did not scruple to pass from one to another, tarrying longest where they found the sweetest food. It was an excellent school for young preachers. The conviction that they could not keep their congregations for a moment longer than they interested them, and the feeling that few in those shifting crowds had ever had an opportunity of being told how to be saved, set them free from all conventional restraint, and while the morning air played about the head, expanded the chest, and gave elasticity and compass to the voice, they poured out the devout affections which had all the week been repressed by intellectual labour.

With the exception of these voluntary endeavours, in which the subject of this Memoir took an energetic and successful part, the students of the first years were not expected to render service in the pulpit. They had thus more time to give to their studies and to listen to the instruction of superior preachers. Mr. Brock, being a member of the church at Highgate, considered it his duty to be frequently there, but as the distance was great he was oftener in other chosen places. "Among the preachers," he says, "whom I liked to hear were

Dr. Andrew Reed, Dr. Price, Mr. Binney, Dr. Leifchild, and Mr. Stovel."

These influences received a marked accession from the enthusiastic public meetings which about this time were held in the Metropolis in consequence of what was termed the "Jamaica Insurrection," and which it is well known brought public indignation to a point which no longer permitted slavery to exist under British rule. A question which aroused the moral sentiments of the whole country, could not but kindle to the intensest ardour young men looking forward to public life in connection with the churches most closely affected by the movement, and brought under the impetuous and overwhelming eloquence of Knibb. There was no need of the vigilance of the officers of the "Early Rising Society" in Stepney College in those days. The men were at their books by sunrise, preparing, not for that day but for the day after, that in the evening, usually given to such preparation, they might be at Finsbury, Spafields, or Exeter Hall, to weep over the "moving accidents," which the chief orator told with inimitable pathos; or, when he burst into indignant denunciation and carried his oppressed people from human governments to the feet of the righteous God, to rise with the whole audience and shout solemn opposition to tyranny. These excitements were by no means transient or sterile. They awoke just impulses and trained the judgment to hold them under command while in pursuit of great public measures.

Traces of this teaching will be found in later years. In the meanwhile, the close of the first session and the opening of the second are thus recorded:—

"The session of 1831 went quietly on towards its close in July, nothing occurring to interrupt our studies, or to disturb our peace. The students were in the main kindly affectioned one to another. With several of them I enjoyed much true religious intercourse; and although a good many college influences were inimical to the vigour and freshness of our godliness, we encouraged and helped one another to hold them in check. The tutors had won and received our respect. The Evangelistic labours which we had undertaken in two or three dark neighbourhoods, had been blessed to many of our hearers; and the several families with whom we had enjoyed pleasant associations assured us of a hearty welcome on our return from the recess.

"By the 1st September I was back in my place at Stepney, with such of my former fellow-students as had not fulfilled their four years' term, and with several others who had come into the house for the first time. The arrangements for us second years' men having been made, I went to work accordingly. Mr. Murch took us further on in Theology and Philosophy; and to our study with him of Hebrew he added that of Syriac, greatly to the satisfaction of almost every member of the class. Mr. Tomkins also took us farther on in his several departments, completing his

course by a series of most useful lectures on the Greek Testament. An elocution master was provided for us through this session, but he was an egregious failure, and we obtained no good.

"Invitations to Mr. Murch for my services in the pulpit became more and more frequent, some of them from the country, but the greater part from London. He thought it best on the whole to comply with them, although his compliance became the occasion of considerable present inconvenience to me, and I believe of much ultimate harm. My course of study was seriously interrupted, and my habits of study were greatly injured. I was making sermons when I should have been mastering principles; I was expending force upon present service when I should have been expending it upon preparation for future service; and I was occupying public places, when the only proper place for me was the seclusion of the study with my books, or the more sacred seclusion of the closet with my Heavenly Father. It was of the Lord's mercies that no greater mischiefs ensued. They threatened certainly, but in the exceeding riches of His grace I trust they were turned aside."

It would not be right to suppress his account of the wrong which he believed he thus suffered. It is natural enough for the Presidents of colleges to desire to meet the wishes of influential churches, but it has sometimes led them to do injustice to the men, and no inconsiderable damage to the churches themselves.

In some instances, it is true, a mind has come prematurely to the close of its development; every effort to impart more knowledge seems to make it the less able to use what it has acquired, and the best course may be to throw open the gates and let it go at once to the discipline of actual work. But this was not such a case. This was a man with an intense thirst for knowledge, unwearied in application, and acquiring every day greater command of his mind, and of the materials for lifelong improvement. He would have repaid a hundredfold whatever culture had been bestowed upon him; and although by the Divine blessing on his extraordinary industry he repaired much of the loss he now suffered, he would by fairer treatment have been at least spared the exaggerated sense of deficiency by which he was haunted throughout life. His reminiscences of this period are at once so instructive and so strikingly illustrative of his character, that probably few readers will think them too minute.

"In the course of the session, the church at Maze Pond, Southwark, was deprived by death of its pastor, the Rev. Isaac Mann, M.A. I was sent there to preach on the Sunday following his funeral; and, as innocent as a babe of any thought of being asked to succeed Mr. Mann, I went and preached. The Maze Pond Church was deemed to be, and certainly it deemed itself to be, nearly, if not quite, the most aristocratical of the denomination in London. It was an ancient

church withal, having a high traditionary reputation for intelligence and wealth. Great London merchants, lawyers, and bankers had been found among its deacons, and scholars and orators in succession had taken the oversight of it in the Lord. For a student of the second year to be asked to preach there at all was a wonder, and for such a student to be asked again and again, was not to be believed." *

Some light perhaps is thrown upon this movement by an incident which has been kindly communicated by the Rev. J. B. Pike of Merton, who entered the College in that year.

"It was very plainly to be seen," says Mr. Pike, "by any new-comers to the College that Mr. Brock was a man of note among his fellows; but it was not till December 13 in that year, when it was his turn to read a sermon for criticism in the Library, that it was fully known what manner of man we had amongst us. He selected for his text, 2 Cor. v. 14, 'The love of Christ constraineth us,' and proceeded to deliver a discourse which, for unction, fervour, and power, fairly took his small and select audience by storm. Both tutors and students were fairly electrified by it, and had no heart to indulge in anything approaching to unfavourable criticism, but gave utterance to their feelings in lan-

* The archæology of Maze Pond, from the Abbot's Garden of the sixteenth century downwards, is pleasantly given in the Rev. Charles Stanford's *libretto* called "Home and Church: A Chapter in Family Life at Old Maze Pond," Hodder, 1871.—ED.

guage of unmingled eulogy. I heard scores of sermons subsequently delivered in the same room and under similar circumstances, some doubtless characterised by greater intellectual power or more of exegetical acumen, but never one which produced so general and deep an impression. It so fell out, I believe, in that very week, that the highly esteemed and able pastor of the church at Maze Pond somewhat unexpectedly expired; and the deacons in the emergency applied to our President for a supply on the next Sunday. He had been so impressed by Mr. Brock's Library sermon, that, although out of his turn, he sent him; and again and again they obtained his services." *

The reminiscences thus proceed :—

"On the approach of our vacation for *1832*, Mr. Murch informed me that the deacons at Maze Pond wished me to preach there on every Sunday during the vacation. I was of course aware that no successor had yet been found for Mr. Mann, and I remember suggesting to my tutor that the deacons had probably some ulterior design in thus wishing me to preach for a succession of weeks. He agreed with me, but recommended me nevertheless to comply with their wish.

"I considered and considered. There would be two services on each Sunday and one in each week. The demand upon my capacity for making sermons would be great, and upon other capacities besides. To conduct the devotions of the church after a proper manner

* Note A.

would be one momentous responsibility; to visit the sick would be another; to converse with inquirers would be another; and there would be many besides. The old question came, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' but then the old answer followed, 'Our sufficiency is of God.' So I acquiesced, and when the College vacation began I went to be the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Kitson, near Kennington Common. My friend had several daughters and one son, all grown up and well affected towards the truth. A room was allotted to me for my study, and such books as I required were at once supplied. There was nothing for it but downright hard work, if so be I was to hold up my head at all. The dawdling away of a morning would have been ruinous either to the morning or the afternoon sermon, perhaps to both. Against the different kinds of dawdling I consequently set my face; and one way or another, when the times for preaching arrived in succession, some sort of sermon was ready.

"Large and lasting were the reasons which accumulated during that month for my setting to my seal that 'God is true.' The evenings of the Sundays were free, the services being held in the morning and afternoon. It occurred to Mrs. Kitson that a gathering of the young folks of the congregation in their drawing-room would be advantageous, if I would conduct a service that should bear specially on their relations and responsibilities to Christ. The idea was carried out on successive Sunday evenings, and great blessing was vouchsafed to us

from on high. Nearly all who came to the meeting were converted and gave themselves unto the Lord.

"Conversations almost of necessity came up in different ways about my becoming ultimately the pastor of the church. There was no disguising it that that was what the deacons were contemplating; and I suppose I must record that there seemed to be no great doubt that the general feeling was in sympathy with their own. Nevertheless I felt more and more unwilling to give the subject any consideration. With antecedents such as mine, and with inexperience and incapacity such as mine, the idea of my becoming the pastor at Maze Pond had only to be named to be abandoned. My witness was in heaven that I was unfeignedly and deeply distressed. Why could I not be let alone to get the full advantage of the discipline and the knowledge which the College had placed within my reach?

"September came, and our session of 1832–33 began. I now moved up into the third year's class, and with both tutors the course of our studies was a great advancement upon the last. I felt it to be worth while to work, and that such work was a positive delight; to be interrupted in it I believed would be a grievous misfortune, and to be removed from it altogether to become the pastor of a leading metropolitan church, a loss which I should never be able to repair.

"In the midst of various schemings to meet the existing difficulties, such as carrying on college-work and church-work at the same time, other and most

serious difficulties arose, through what has always seemed to me to have been singular inadvertence on the part of our President. The church at Norwich, over which the venerable Mr. Kinghorn had presided for forty years, had recently been deprived of him by death. For a successor to him the deacons were now actually in search, and it seemed good to them to think of me. To my tutor they consequently applied, requesting him to send me down to Norwich to preach on a Sunday near at hand. Instead of foreclosing the matter at once, he complied with the request, and directed me to present myself to Mr. Kinghorn's congregation at the time named. I demurred but acquiesced.

"In many ways I enjoyed the visit uncommonly, but I presently wished that I had not gone. Interviews were sought and communications made which answered substantially to those with which I had been embarrassed and troubled at Maze Pond.

"On my return from Norwich I gave myself to my College-work as far as I could; but Mr. Murch soon informed me that I must have new sermons ready, since the Maze Pond deacons fully intended to renew their application for my services from Sunday to Sunday, either for the morning or afternoon, or both. They did so, much to my discomfort, but much more to my detriment. The pressure upon me became heavier than I could bear, and in the early part of 1833 I fairly broke down in health and spirits. Medical

advisers insisted upon immediate suspension of labour of all kinds, following up that requirement by the recommendation that I should spend some time in Devonshire. I believe that I was really seriously unwell, and that I never did a wiser thing than to get away into the quiet and seclusion of my mother's house at Barnstaple. I was made heartily welcome, and everything was done to recruit my strength by all who were at home.

"Presently my quiet was interrupted by communications both from Norwich and Maze Pond. Each church sent me a formal invitation to preach for some months with a direct view to the pastorate, if so be that, at the end of that period, such should seem to be the will of God. The Maze Pond folk sent their invitation for three months by post; but the Norwich folk thought it wiser to send theirs for six months by one of their deacons in person—this journey, of two days and a night, showing at least their earnestness. The matter was thus brought to a crisis, and I gave myself to the consideration of it accordingly. Never had I needed wisdom so urgently as I needed it then; never, perhaps, did I seek it more earnestly than I sought it then. It was pre-eminently a 'time of need.'

"I returned to College, where I took counsel with Mr. Murch, not much I fear to my advantage. He would not advise me either way, neither would he decline the requests which were made for my services, sometimes by the one church and sometimes by the

other. To my dismay, he sent me to Norwich to preach on a particular occasion; and I was invited to enter on the pastorate forthwith, any further probation being abandoned. On the sole condition that I should not preach against strict communion I should be welcomed there and then."

In former times the churches were accustomed to demand much longer probationary periods than they do now. It was not unusual to keep a young minister three, six, or even twelve months waiting for the decision which was intended to determine the scene of his whole life's ministry. In their eagerness to secure the man of their choice, the Norwich church, it will be perceived, waived their six months' demand, and presented an instantaneous invitation; but the London church, though first in the field, and by no means less intent on its object, even with a knowledge of that concession, would abate only one third from the three months which they had required, and that on the condition that the time should be continuously spent in their service, and not broken by intervals of absence in the service of another congregation, to which they did not consider it dignified to be regarded as a rival.

The contest, happily, was brought to a conclusion before the vehement appeals from both sides pushed the object of their regard into any conduct inconsistent with honourable candour, or led to such exasperation of feeling as might have prevented the gaining and the losing side maintaining their mutual regard.

"At last my mind inclined very clearly and strongly for Norwich. It seemed plain to me that, of the two places, the country one would give me the largest leisure for the prosecution of my studies. Social life, too, in Norwich among the Nonconformists was at that time singularly agreeable and reputable, and to its several benefits I knew I should presently be introduced. I lost no time in making known my inclination to the deacons at Maze Pond. One interview followed another, the object on their part being to prove that I should have more advantages, literary, educational, and social, in the metropolis than elsewhere. I listened respectfully and candidly, but I was unconvinced. My leaning to Norwich became stronger every day."

Both these churches were favoured with deacons, (upon whom, in the absence of pastors, the most delicate business devolves,) of great wisdom and piety; and amid all the ardent expressions of attachment which it was their part to convey to the young minister, who was walking thus early in slippery places, it is most gratifying to observe the paternal fidelity with which they counselled him. His host, Mr. Kitson, gives him discriminating and loving advice on the cultivation of the spiritual life; and Mr. Beddome, when he foresaw what the decision was likely to be, and while expressing grief at "the issue of the patience and prayers of the past twelve months," says, "It is a matter of serious doubt with me whether your ministerial gifts are so likely to improve anywhere else so much as in London; but if

the Lord should direct your way to Norwich, I hope you will find some friends there who can sit with delight and edification under your ministry, and yet occasionally prove that such a habit is not incompatible with the exercise of a spirit of friendly criticism such as may have a profitable bearing on the development of your mental faculties. I have seen the operation of this mutual care for each other in London, and I would advise you, with all the affection of a brother, not to wait for, but *to court it* at the hands of such men as Mr. Wilkin and Mr. Brightwell. Any defect in reasoning or looseness of declamation is more readily apparent to an intelligent hearer than to the speaker himself; and the facility of speech with which God has endowed you will make it the more desirable that you should have some *affectionate critics* among your hearers. I hope ever to follow you with my prayers."

This advice was probably the more readily given in consequence of Mr. Brock's known good sense in accepting such criticism. He was exceedingly sensitive to both praise and blame, and more inclined to take a depressing than an elating view of his performances; but he was above the petulance which cannot bear an unfavourable admonitory hint even from a friend. He was more disposed to say with Whichcote, "If I have not a friend, Heaven send me an enemy, that I may know what my faults are!"

There is surely something manly in this acknowledgment: "I found," he says of his College days, "kind

friends in the congregations to which I was accustomed to preach, by whom my sermons were faithfully but generously criticised. I thanked them at the time and I have thanked them far more heartily many times since. By some of them faults of doctrine or sentiment were pointed out; by others, faults in statement or in reasoning; by others, faults in delivery or in style. No greater proof could they have given of their solicitude for my usefulness: in no better way could they have endeavoured to promote it."

The reader, before he advances further in this narrative, may crave some distincter conception of the person and manner of the young man who produced in well-instructed congregations such importunate desires for his services.

With a figure tall, somewhat thin and pliant, an easy and careless gait, flaxen hair lying in no particular direction, together with blunt though gentle speech, he gave the impression of having come fresh from free country life.* The head was not of the intellectual type; but the face was full of decision, energy, and reserved power, with a certain leonine force which

* He sometimes amused his friends by quoting an observation made by the President of Stepney on opening his front-door to him one day after one of his early interviews. Glancing at the white hat, bright buttons, and yellow waistcoat, he said with his gravely humorous look, "You will find that style, my young friend, rather conspicuous when you become a student in this grim college!" It was enough. No one more quickly conformed to the congruous and becoming when his eyes were once opened.

made you sure that he had a point to carry, and that it certainly would be carried. The mouth, however, had no severity, but was full of kindliness and humour, and in its smile extremely sweet; while the deep-toned voice, although joined with a somewhat cumbrous articulation, told of trust and sympathy. It was the sort of voice which is felt to be most in harmony with religious thought and emotion.

His sermons cost him at first immense labour. He seemed to himself, as he once said to the biographer, to expend his entire being upon each, so that whence the next was to come he could not imagine. When his Stepney study was entered in the course of the day, and that was seldom done with too much ceremony by his more intimate friends, the eyes which had danced with mirth at the breakfast-table would often be red with tears, and the voice which had rolled waves of irresistibly humorous banter over the head of some unresenting Welsh or Cornish student, choked with emotion. He had reached the heart of a discourse. The Bible would be open on one side, and the folios of "Charnock on the Attributes," at that time a very helpful author to him, standing upon their ends on the other, while he ran out his thoughts upon a slate, and then slowly transcribed them upon his paper.

His manner in the pulpit was what it continued to be through life, calm and unembarrassed. It had no approach to exaggeration, but rather suggested the existence of deeper convictions than obtained expres-

sion, and a well of feeling which was not quite disclosed. The only gesture was the extension of the right hand, which every one could observe was more slender and delicate than the general mass of the person promised. This movement of the hand, together with the expression of the mouth, was the image which was found most deeply imprinted on the imagination when the memory recalled some impressive discourse. The complete bearing of the man, in short, was so unconventional and unaffected, the countenance so transparent and cheerful, and the spirit, especially in the devotional service—the actual religion of the assembly—so serious, lowly, and filial, that he stole away the heart of critical and fastidious hearers, so that they never thought of imperfections, which he himself was the last to deny or extenuate.

Norwich.

"*I fain to tell the things that I behold,*
But feel my wits to fail and tongue to fold.

Vouchsafe, then, O Thou most Almighty Sprite!
From whom all gifts of wit and knowledge flow,
To shed into my breast some sparkling light
Of Thine eternal truth; that I may shew
Some little beams to mortal eyes below
Of that immortal Beauty, there with Thee,
Which in my weak, distraughted mind I see."

—SPENSER.

Chapter Sixth.

"Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to whomsoever I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak."—*To Jeremiah.*

A STRANGER looking upon Norwich from the neighbouring eminences, and marking the fine spire of the Cathedral presiding over the multitudinous towers of the parish churches, might suppose that he was about to descend into a city of absolute uniformity of thought and worship. But from an early time the people have been famous for independence. The Puritans were strong there in the sixteenth century; and when Elizabeth commanded Archbishop Parker to put down the reading and commenting on the Scriptures, which had been introduced into the Church service, she gave him, it is said, strict orders to begin with Norwich. She did a wiser thing when, by advice of the Duke of Norfolk, she offered an asylum in the county to refugees from the Netherlands. In Norwich, as in Honiton, families of foreign birth made for themselves a position which no subsequent persecution shook; their superior intelligence and education, together with the arts and manufactures which they introduced, having prevented them being crushed during the evil times which followed, and enabled them to transmit to their pos-.

terity their intellectual activity and enlightened love of freedom.

Among the various religious communions of the city the Baptists held an early place. It is not necessary here to trace their history, but only to observe that at the moment to which this narrative applies they had lost an eminent teacher in the person of Joseph Kinghorn. He had spent the whole period of his ministry, extending to forty-three years, on this one spot, and, as his friend and biographer assures us, had come to be regarded with feelings approaching to reverence by men of all ranks and religions in the city.* "Would that I could faithfully draw his portrait," says another writer, "as it still remains vividly present to my mind. His personal appearance was striking; his figure was tall and spare; altogether he had an apostolic air, and none could fail to perceive in him a remarkable personage. His character was pre-eminently practical, and good sense marked all he said and did. To use a somewhat droll expression of his own, 'He was a perpendicular man;' he turned not aside a hand-breadth from the straight path. In the practical application of his subject he especially excelled—urging the great motives of the Gospel, and ever pointing to Christ and Him crucified. His impressive manner and appearance, his frequent emotion, often testified by his faltering voice and gathering tears, enlisted the sympathy of his auditors,

* "Joseph Kinghorn: a biography," by Martin Hood Wilkin, with introduction by Simon Wilkin, F.L.S. 1855.

and imparted to his ministrations a special power. What he said left an abiding impression; and I have heard his discourses alluded to with delight by aged members of his church who had borne them in memory till life itself was ebbing. The children's children of those he taught are at this day occupying the places of their fathers. How deep and tender was the love he bore his people was proved by the affecting declaration which he addressed to the church after his father's decease [he was never married]:—'I am now,' he said, 'loosened from every earthly tie, I have no other care but you; henceforth you, the members of this church, shall be my brother and my sister, my father and my mother.'" *

It was a brave thing for any one to step into the place of such a man; and if the eyes had not been mercifully "holden" that they should not see the difficulties that might arise, and did arise, upon such an event, that step would hardly have been taken in the present instance. It was undoubtedly an advantage to follow one who had been held in general esteem, and whose preaching had been marked by such high qualities that while there was already an inner circle of Christians of more than average intelligence, there was a wider circle prepared to listen with respect to evangelical instruction. The diversities of the two men might even operate in favour of the new comer. If Hebraic

* "Memorials of the Life of Mr. Brightwell of Norwich," by his daughter, Cecilia Lucy Brightwell. P. 37. Privately printed in 1869.

and Patristic learning no longer gave dignity to the argument of the discourse, there was a massive common sense which was quite as convincing. If the finely-cut features, the hair smoothly divided over the centre of the forehead and flowing towards the shoulders, together with the antique dress and the quaint manner which gave to the elder the ideal aspect of an apostle, found in almost every particular a marked contrast in the younger minister, the change was not without the charm of novelty to the old, and of something like release from long restraint to the young. "I was amused," runs an entry in the new pastor's diary, "by a remark made on my first appearance at St. Mary's: 'Well, we have got a *ploughman* for a minister now!'"

They very soon discovered, however, that his bluntness was accompanied by a true dignity as well as an exceedingly tender heart. It had been arranged, not very wisely perhaps, that on the Saturday of his arrival he should spend the evening at the house of the deacon of a neighbouring church and one of the *savants* of the religious circle, where a number of young persons were gathered to meet him. While at the repast, some place was referred to in a very obscure part of the missionary field which no one could name, when the host, glancing at the new arrival, wearied with the journey and preoccupied with the morrow's work, exclaimed, "Now, then, a young man fresh from college is the very person we want to tell us where so and so is." With that firm voice which, though softened with good-nature,

always carried command in it, the stranger replied: "Sir, as an old deacon, you should know better how to treat a young minister." The retort gave him at once a place in the respect of the company, and the interrogator became one of his fastest friends. The other side of him came to light on the Sunday morning, when he surprised his host by asking him how far off the barracks were. He was told they were at some distance. "But I must go to them," said he. "To-day?" "Yes, now." "Then," said his friend, "if it must be so, I shall have to accompany you, for you might lose your way and not be in time for the service." On the way, he explained that a mother who had been in great anxiety on account of a son who had enlisted, and whose regiment was quartered in Norwich, had implored him to go and see the lad. "I promised her," he added, "that I would make the visit my first business, and I cannot preach in peace till I have done it." When they reached the barracks the object of the search was found, when the student addressed the young soldier in a manner so wise, serious, and touching, that all were affected, and not least the deacon who had cautiously accompanied his charge. The incident became pretty well known before the afternoon service, and served to open his way into the people's hearts.

Although received with great cordiality, the first weeks of his residence were marked by considerable mental conflict. His health was far from being re-established, and the suspense in which he had been so

long held was not perfectly ended. A journal to which he had recourse during this period of conflict with a view, apparently, of imparting order to the confused multitude of his deliberations, gives some idea of his condition.

The attempt to pursue study and to meet the weekly demand for public instruction grew formidable.

JOURNAL.—"*May* 1833.—My feelings in prospect of regular preaching are at times extremely painful. Were it not for gracious promises I should faint: I do so almost as I write; but depending on Divine aid I would be 'still pursuing.'"

"17.—Preparing for Sunday. O my soul! what shall I do to meet the demands upon me? 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels.' Were it not for the promise of God's help, I would at once retire into obscurity; but with it I will press on."

"23.—Commenced my preparations for Sunday, having completed an attentive perusal of 'Hall's Reply to Kinghorn.' Felt so poorly as to apply to a medical man, who prohibited my preaching on the following Sunday. Devoted all the time I could spare from violent pain to the reading of Greek Testament."

The formal decision which was to end the perplexity that had so long assailed him at length came.

"31.—The most important day, on many accounts, in my whole life. At its commencement I prayed for divine direction and assistance, and as the day drew to a close I felt my mind satisfied that God would have me accept the invitation to Norwich. At

six o'clock I met the deacons at the house of Mr. Cozens, and there I formed, at least virtually, a union of the most solemn and important kind by agreeing to become pastor of the church of St. Mary's.* My friends expressed themselves very kindly, and after a statement of my fears and my feelings, dear brother, or rather Father Hawkins,† implored the Divine blessing on the proceedings of the evening. And now, O my soul! what can I do to discharge the duties of that arduous though honourable station to which I have been called? I will here, and I do hereby, call upon my Heavenly Father to gird me with Almighty power; to fire me with holy zeal, to inspire me with heavenly love, to keep me through all the difficulties and temptations incident to my situation by His own power through faith unto salvation. 'Without Me, ye can do nothing:' 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped me:' 'The same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' "

The subject recurs in a few days:—

"*June* 3.—I have been engaged in writing to the church informing them of my acceptance of their invitation. It was solemn work. I now sustain a new and most important character. I was a son—a member—of a church, but now a pastor. What duties does it involve! What talents and piety are required! What awful consequences will it entail amidst the develop-

* So named from the parish.

† The father of the Derby Tutor.

ments of the last day! O my Father and my God! Who is sufficient for these things? Cleanse the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit. Uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Fill my earthen vessel with heavenly treasure. Let me have grace to help in time of need."

He was at this anxious period very much sustained by friends of great intelligence and affection, and by many signs of the Divine blessing on his ministry; but the new responsibilities pressed heavily upon him, and threw his mind in upon itself with scrupulous investigation.

"*June* 7.—Harassed this morning as to the exact point at which temptation is accompanied by sin. I fancied that I had resisted temptation; but before I was aware it had returned and obtained a momentary ascendancy. I was surprised into it; but I am afraid to say so, lest it should be merely a device of the enemy to lull me to repose. Search me, O God, and know my heart, for, alas! I am unable to comprehend it!"

In somewhat the same spirit:—

"*June* 10.—In the evening of this day I attended the church meeting for the first time in the character of a pastor. Verily it was solemn work. I should feel confident in the communication of Divine strength were I as watchful and prayerful as I ought to be; but, alas! how deceitful is the heart—deceitful above all things, and mine above all others! O Lord, strengthen my resolutions. I am afraid to make any more. Still I venture most earnestly to implore that I may be

strengthened with all might by the Spirit in my inner man."

In this self-renouncing and prayerful temper he began to find his way into the inner life of the people, recording the discovery which young pastors soon make: "Verily one's work out of the pulpit is more than that in it," yet able to add in the midst of all: "I began to feel a little again as it was in months past, and with a glad and thankful heart prepared for Sunday." That imperative preparation is the balm for many a sorrowful week!

On the 25th of July, 1833, came the public recognition and setting apart of the young pastor. This service retained at that time the elaborate and solemn character which prevailed among the old Nonconformists. "Fasting and prayer," after the earliest examples, had not ceased to introduce the public exercises, nor had the "laying on of the hands of the presbytery" disappeared from a certain part of the designation prayer. The grounds of nonconformity were generally reviewed in one discourse, a charge given to the pastor in another, and counsels addressed to the congregation in a third; the popular interest centering in the answers, sometimes amounting to an autobiography, given by the young minister to questions proposed to him respecting his religious experience, his purposes as a pastor, and his views of the leading doctrines of Christianity. The tendency of the present time is either totally to omit this service, or to replace it by a social meeting inter-

spersed with pleasantry and compliment. The church of St. Mary's, although accounted in some respects exclusive, considered itself bound up with sister churches in the common interests of the kingdom of Christ, and regarded the appointment of a new pastor as an event not only interesting to itself, but likely to affect, possibly for many years, the religious life of the city. It seemed to them, therefore, to be simply a duty to invite general sympathy and approval in a solemn assembly of this description. It proved to be a day of deep impressions, confirming the common purposes of pastor and people, and placing both in proper public relations to Christians of other communities. "The influence of the service," was the young pastor's brief but grateful note, "was good in a high degree, and I felt encouraged by the several indications which the day supplied that ample opportunities would be afforded me for becoming a good minister of Jesus Christ."

His physical power, however, was far from being equal to his aspirations, and it was fortunate that the people who had used so much effort to obtain him, proved equally anxious to protect and cherish what they had secured. For some time they would not allow him to preach more than once on Sundays and once during the rest of the week; an arrangement having been made with the President of Stepney College, by which the senior students were allowed by turns to render the requisite aid. Some of these gentlemen were so much prized by the congregation during the

vacancy of the pastorate, that one or another of them would probably have been chosen for the office, had they not all advised that no decision should be thought of till their "Brother Brock" had been heard; for he, they said, would probably settle the question. This chivalrous conduct, which was only a fair reflection of the spirit of the College brotherhood, was not forgotten during this renewal of their services.

After a time the pastor found himself alone, pursuing the same laborious method of preparation, writing his compositions twice over, and spending the entire working part of two days in each week on the morning's discourse; a toil which he was accustomed to say he never regretted, as it enabled him not only to test his thoughts at the time, but to speak with order and accuracy when called upon to do so without previous warning. But great as was his solicitude as to his work in the pulpit, it was for some time still greater as to his duties in the church-meeting. He had had no previous experience in the conduct of such meetings, and no attempt had been made in College to give instruction in the principles upon which they should proceed. This was very soon perceived by punctilious persons who raised frequent objections to points of form and to proceedings which were alleged to compromise the "faith and order" of the church. He was more discomposed by those incidents than he would have been if he had been less anxious to do right, and had more distinctly known what it was right to do.

The support which he received from the more educated part of his flock was, on the other hand, of the greatest service to him. His openness to receive criticism has already been noticed; and finding that he had among his stated and occasional hearers some men of considerable literary attainments and powers of thought, he had the good sense to encourage them to contribute to his stores. It was no uncommon thing for him to receive in the early part of the week a letter from Mr. Wilkin, Mr. Brewer, Mr. Brightwell, or Mr. Youngman, expressing some difference of opinion on his expositions, and founding their representations on the original Greek or Hebrew, which they would quote at large.

One of these friendly knights rushed into the lists more vehemently than the others, and his first encounter awakened some dread:—

"He belonged nominally to an Independent church in the city: but he was at St. Mary's always once on a Sunday, and almost always at our service on Wednesday nights. He was a frequent visitor at my house, and seemed always glad when his visits were returned. His conversation was invariably polemical. To originate a discussion was a delight to him. No statement was too startling for him, if he thought that it would baffle or perplex an opponent. Any reference to ecclesiastical or theological *authority*, as authority, he treated with unmitigated contempt. Often have I been reminded of him in the controversies which have come up in more modern

times. . . . He was a thorough-going *'free-handler'* of sacred things: the forerunner of 'the advanced free-thinkers' of whom we read and hear so much.

"More than once did I say to Mr. Alexander that I must refrain from intercourse with Mr. Youngman, if I meant to retain my hold on the faith once delivered to the saints. He assured me that when I knew him better, I should understand him better; and that it would be with me, as it actually had been with himself, that I should come to hold him in affectionate respect. By degrees Mr. Alexander's intimation was fulfilled. Underneath the polemical and the presumptuous there turned up a good deal of the evangelical; and now and then of the spiritual. . . . He perceived that he was gaining my confidence; and to some expressions of mine, in that direction, he replied by a most kind and generous response, *'Yes;* he would give me the information for which I had asked him: but he must look it up, which he would take care to do without unnecessary delay.'

"In a day or two the information came; and with it a proposal that he should write and send me a short paper every week on some of the deeper points of philosophy and faith. He thought that the study of such papers would interest me: and he also thought that a subsequent discussion on the questions which they raised would contribute to my improvement as an expositor and preacher of God's Word."

It will be but just to the memory of this unusual

man if the chief part of the letter to which this passage refers, be here given:

MR. YOUNGMAN TO MR. BROCK.

"*Nov.* 18, 1834,—I have to endeavour to do you good—a delightful prospect to my mind from the pleasure of the attempt, from the hope of success, and from the certainty of myself obtaining benefit. Your situation is one of great promise of usefulness such as fully to justify the disadvantage you incurred by leaving Stepney prematurely, but it is one of labour and difficulty and no small danger; and what I should aim at towards you would be to inspire you with a spirit of caution, and if possible to impress you with the lessons of experience. In the meantime I will just advert to that loss of time which you so much lament in your early history. Probably, considering the whole of your character and circumstances, this may not be so great a loss as you are apt to imagine. Some minds require a tender culture and need to be warmed into activity; others demand a rugged discipline and some early frosts to prevent too luxuriant a growth; and He who fits His instruments for the purpose to which He destines them has doubtless been forming you for the station in which you are placed. Still there is of necessity much left to be supplied by your own exertions; and I feel confident in offering you a piece of advice which is, I think, worthy of being written indelibly on your heart.

"Let one course of study run through all your official

life, from this its beginning to its last hour of intellectual existence, viz: The systematic study of the Scriptures—the Old Testament in the Hebrew with the aid of the Septuagint: the New of the Greek with that of the Vulgate. However small and slow your progress, constantly and daily persevere; the difficulties will diminish to you, and the rewards will multiply upon you. The advantage of this course will be first the *direct*, in furnishing you with such a knowledge of the Scriptures as shall fit you for the work of the ministry; and secondly the *collateral*, for it is impossible to sail down such a stream without being compelled to explore the country on all sides as you pass along. Such a continued study of the Scriptures will bring before you, from time to time, every question of philology, antiquities, history, geography, chronology, natural and moral philosophy, and in fact all subjects which can occupy the mind, and you will not have to seek after them in a desultory manner, but they will open themselves in a connected series, supporting and illustrating each other, leaving you the chance of pursuing each separately just as far as your occasion may require. It is a great study—the study of the Scriptures—in their language, in their history, and (which is the sum of all) in their interpretation. All terminates in this. All Christians profess to submit to the authority of Scripture, but they may be none the nearer to each other or to the truth. The Scriptures are neither more nor less to us than what the interpretation makes them, and

herein, therefore, lie involved all theological difficulties; and all at last comes to this, that every man's knowledge is just what his own labours and the blessing of God do for him. Hence, whilst our knowledge may be perpetually approximating to the truth, it must ever be imperfect and fallible, and hence, too, the call for unabating labour to ourselves, and universal tolerance towards our fellow-labourers.

"There is a paper of Baxter's, I believe, at the close of his history of his life, in which, summing up the results of his experience, he says he had learned *to hold different truths with different degrees of conviction, according to the force of their evidence.* This appears to me one of the most important principles ever given by an uninspired man, and the only firm anchor for an ardent and inquiring spirit. For every day's experience shows us that if we think ourselves compelled to hold every religious truth at all times with the same grasp, there is great danger that if we come to suspect or to be convinced of the falsehood of any one, even the least of them, we shall feel tempted to give up others with it, or perhaps make shipwreck of the whole. . . . I have to repeat my wish for an opportunity of conferring with you personally, as I have a few things to say which cannot well be written."

The reminiscences again proceed:

"I confess that the proposal disquieted me, and I was nearly cowardly and unwise enough to decline it. However, on maturer consideration, I accepted Mr.

Youngman's proposal, and no time was lost in carrying it into full effect. Nothing came amiss to my friend as a subject for a paper. The more heretical or the more abstruse the subject, the better was he pleased; and the more difficult the subsequent discussion, the greater was his delight. Sorely was I put to it often. Every now and then I felt humbled by my lack of requisite information, and by my manifold deficiencies in intellectual discipline and power. But the whole thing proved to be capital schooling for me, in many ways, and I gratefully acknowledge to-day my great obligation to Mr. Youngman. He indoctrinated me with cautiousness against prejudice and prepossession, which has been invaluable to me ever since. He originated the habit of thinking freely and broadly, in regard to the several declarations and disclosures of the Divine will. I thank God for Mr. Youngman as for another tutor. What I owed to him all through my forty years of ministry I shall never know."*

The first year of the Norwich ministry was one of progress and enjoyment. With access to the fine library of the Literary Institution, the stimulating society of intelligent men, the conscious increase of knowledge, and the weekly assemblies of expectant and prayerful people, crowned by undoubted evidences of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit's influences upon his ministrations, the young pastor, though never without trembling, rejoiced as a strong man to run a race.

* Note B.

Scarcely, however, had the congregation celebrated the history of that year in a form of social fellowship which was quite new to it, and not, at that period, very familiar to any of our congregations, than symptoms of failing health reappeared. Every now and then a sudden affection of the throat stopped him on the threshold of the pulpit, or prevented him, after accomplishing the morning's service, from returning in the afternoon. At one time a minister would be found opportunely in the congregation, and at another the whole service would be resolved into a prayer meeting. The people showed their accustomed good feeling, but it was obvious that the matter required attention. The physician who was consulted prescribed a month's silence, and during that time several families who resided in pleasant situations in the neighbourhood, entertained and did their uttermost to cheer and restore him.

"The month," he says, "passed pleasantly enough, and I seemed to be considerably better, so that I ventured to occupy the pulpit and conduct the entire service by myself. It was a time of much comfort and congratulation. We were all happy together. But scarcely was the service over before the symptoms of mischief returned upon me, in troublesome cough and incipient sore throat. The doctor came, and after careful examination of the case, renewed his direction to me not to preach. Matters thus became serious. That he was right, I had no doubt, from my own feelings of physical

discomfort and feebleness; but, if I could not preach, what could I do but retire from my post? Greatly was I exercised; especially as a second medical man, who had been consulted about my health officially, pronounced me to be suffering from pulmonary disease, and had distinctly declined to recommend me to the office with which I had desired to insure my life. Under these circumstances my resignation of the pastorate appeared to me to be imperative. The duties having become impossible, nothing remained but that the office should be given up. I conveyed this conclusion of mine to the deacons, assuring them of my sore and sorrowful regret. To my surprise, they avowed their belief that my resignation would be exceedingly premature; at any rate, they would be no parties to it for some time yet. If, by and by, it should become unavoidable, they would take it into their consideration; for the present, they had set their minds upon something else. I then found that they had been arranging for my absence for an indefinite period in order to my seeking the full benefit of my native air in Devonshire. They had consulted the church withal, and *there* was the unanimous resolution of the church, for me to read and understand. No document was ever more distinctly drawn, or more lovingly expressed. They all deplored the necessity for this temporary separation; they all united in urging me to consent to it; and they all expressed their hope that, as the consequence of it, I should be recovered and restored to

health. On consideration, I deemed it right to avail myself of the proferred kindness; trusting that the Head of the Church would overrule this unexpected and undesired episode to the greater glory of His name. On the 11th of April I left Norwich."

"In those familiar days," says the Rev. A. Reed, in the reminiscences of Norwich and its affairs, by which this narration will presently be enlivened, "when the pastor went to London or returned from it, it was usual for a large part of his congregation to come to the coach to bid him welcome or farewell. I have seen the road quite filled with friends, who, when Brock or Alexander started or returned, crowded round with salutations, and often with small baskets of provisions, or rugs and wrappings for the journey. On one such occasion I remember Mr. Brock was going off to London; the coach was just starting; Lawes, the coachman, had gathered up the reins; the horses pranced and showed a frisky disposition, when a very attached old lady-member of St. Mary's becoming alarmed, exclaimed: "Drive well, Mr. Lawes, for my blessed minister is behind you!"

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Chapter Seventh.

"Were all the yeare one constant sunshine, wee
Should have no flowers;
All would be drought and leanness; not a tree
Would make us bowers."

—*Henry Vaughan.*

THE demonstrations made on this occasion, though expressive of strong affection, did not avail to disperse the sadness with which the pastor tore himself from his work. The brief entries in the Journal, which help us to trace his journey, indicate a heart oppressed, but always on the point of overflowing with gratitude to God and man.

"JOURNAL: *April* 11, 1834.—Departed from Norwich amid much, very much strong feeling. Ride to London an unpleasant one; day cold; company indifferent. Found my good friend Kitson waiting for me at the coach, from whom and his family I received every mark of affectionate respect.

"14*th* to 19*th*.—Visiting various friends in the Metropolis and its vicinity. How to feel aright, much less how to express myself aright, I know not at receiving so much kindness from some of the most excellent of the earth. Rich and poor are alike: to the luxuries

of the one and the mere necessaries of the other I am bid welcome. Truly the Lord hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad—at home a people affectionate, numerous and happy; abroad a circle of friends large and unwavering in their attachment. Twelve months have elapsed since I saw them, and many then felt disappointed as to Maze Pond; yet on revisiting them, parents and children, servants and all, seemed to vie with each other in expressing all that was encouraging and all that was kind.

"I heard of several instances of usefulness from my services at Maze Pond: two instances of conversion in one family, a daughter and a maid-servant, the one referring to a sermon from 'Thou God seest me,' the latter to another from 'As Moses lifted up the serpent.' O Lord! what am I? If ever I felt my insignificance and unworthiness it has been when I have contrasted what God has done for me and what man has done for me, with my own sinfulness and guilt. The only thing that parallels my *mercies* are my *sins*. 'God's ways are not our ways, neither are His thoughts our thoughts,' or I should have been despised and rejected of men—deservedly, and long ago."

On the 21st he left London for Exeter, and thence proceeded to Barnstaple, where he spent a week with his mother to their mutual delight, but with no improvement in his health.

"*May 1st.*—Went alone to Lynton. There I have enjoyed the wonders and beauties of creation perhaps

more vividly than I have ever done before. Truly 'in secret silence of the soul,' especially in such a situation, one's best feelings are in exercise. Still must I record my proneness, as even there developed, to forget God.

"*6th.*—Perambulated Torquay, and felt that God was very kind to me in giving me all things so richly to enjoy. Learned to-day that my brother Sprigg, of Ipswich, was in the town with his invalid wife; looked for him, and to my great delight discovered him residing with a family, into which I was at once bade heartily welcome. I had never seen either of my hospitable, worthy friends before, yet I obtained a great share of their kindness.

"*12th* and *13th.*—Here I trust my soul has got much good; and among other things for which I must return special thanks, is my acquaintance with Mr. and Mrs. Rouse. May the Lord bless them abundantly! Left the hospitable mansion of my dear friends. Went by fly to Totnes, and thence by coach to Plymouth. Here I had the gratification of meeting the 'South Devon and Cornwall Baptist Association.' I was kindly invited to be present at all their meetings, which were upon the whole interesting. Several friends of my parents were present, and for their sakes treated me with great kindness: thus still more cause for thankful joy. Here I am beloved for my parents' sakes, there, for my work's sake, and in another place for my Lord's sake. In all I trace the goodness of God, but

for which I had not had such parents, neither had been counted faithful to be put into the ministry.

"15*th.*—On reaching Plymouth I was very courteously and heartily invited to take my abode at Mr. Holmden's. This I did, and right glad am I that I did. More genuine unaffected Christian kindness I never received. O my soul! What art thou made of, not to be overwhelmed with the goodness of God in raising up for thee such kind friends? I much question whether any young man has ever received from so large a circle of Christian friends such affectionate respect: I receive nothing else wherever I go. Would that there was a corresponding—a uniformly corresponding—feeling and expression of gratitude to Him to whom I owe it all! Never, I think, never have I felt so much my own ignorance and general incapacity for the situation which I occupy as of late. Oh that the Lord would guide my ways and make me more constantly to conceive of my sufficiency being only of God! Gladly would I retire to some remote, insignificant station; and were I to consult my inclinations, I believe I should propose doing so,—but I think God means me to stay with my dear friends at Norwich."

REMINISCENCES.—"With my deacons and members I kept up a general correspondence, communicating to them the state of my health from time to time. My communications had not been satisfactory to them I found; for on the 17th a letter reached me from the deacons earnestly desiring me to seek the advice of the

most eminent physician within my reach, and to let them know the result. Dr. Cookworthy was accordingly consulted; a man whom I came to hold in great esteem both professionally and personally. After several interviews he prescribed a certain course of treatment, and said that three months more must elapse before I ventured to resume my work in Norwich. I at once conveyed his decision to the deacons; they conveyed it to the church, and the issue was a resolution desiring me to take the three months without any hesitation and to accept a present of fifty pounds for the defrayal of unavoidable expenses. I was exceedingly comforted by such timely and generous kindness, resolving that should I ultimately get back to my pastoral and ministerial duties I would give to the church and congregation proof of my grateful love."

This did not comprise all the tokens of affection which his people gave to him, for they commissioned one of the deacons to proceed in their name to Plymouth, to see both the patient and his medical adviser, and to ascertain that nothing was left undone to preserve the life they so much valued. The biographer, who happened to be spending a college recess with some relatives, in that beautiful neighbourhood, at the time when Mr. Jeremiah Colman arrived, cannot refrain from bearing testimony to the tenderness with which he performed his duties. The solicitude of which he was the representative, seemed continually to veil his kindly

face, and to be proof even against the mirthful sallies which indicated his minister's returning tide of health. He was, however, greatly comforted before he departed, and carried home, with something like triumph, the assurance that all would be well at the expiration of the three months.

That prospect was soon afterwards rendered even more bright by an incident of great interest to the people as well as to their minister. His age, his temperament, and his extending duties had made his settlement in domestic life an object of general desire. The subject, indeed, had by no means been absent from his own thoughts and prayers, and when the time came that these should be realised, his steps were directed as by the finger of an angel.

There had been at Shortwood, in Gloucestershire, ever since the days of Mr. Winterbotham, the most famous of its pastors, a congregation which included an unusual number of well-educated and pious families; and one of Mr. Brock's Plymouth friends who had married a lady of that flock, proposed that he should accompany him on a visit to a place which he foretold would prove not less charming for its society than for its fine scenery. The invitation was accepted and the prediction more than fulfilled.

"Pensile House,"—the home of Mrs. Bliss and her three unmarried daughters,—he afterwards wrote, "was beautifully situated; its garden was capacious and picturesque; the foliage of the woods was in full per-

fection, and the surrounding country abounded in prospects whose beauty could nowhere be surpassed. In regard to the manners and customs of the house I soon found cause for the highest admiration. Happy, thought I, will any man be whose future wife has been nurtured in such a home!" It was not surprising that he should add: "The thought occurred to me that I had been brought hither to find a wife. For a long time I had been making my prayers to the Lord that He would guide me in this great matter of my life. My witness is in heaven that I had not failed to invoke that Divine wisdom which is profitable to direct!"

Although of the general circle to which he had been introduced he could say: "Nowhere else had I fallen in with so many young ladies of my own age, and of habits and tastes so much in harmony with mine," he found his choice, at the end of the first week, centre in Mary Bliss; and favoured by circumstances peculiarly propitious for the prosecution of her acquaintance, before the second week had closed he had obtained her own and her mother's consent to their marriage. The success was immediately announced to the other two objects of his affection,—his mother and his church. Both were delighted; letter after letter coming from his people declaring that they found ample compensation for his long absence in the prospect of his bringing home a bride.

It may be as well to anticipate the later part of the

history by saying here that the hopes thus cherished were by God's goodness realised to the full.

"From the first day of her acquaintance with the church," he wrote to his eldest daughter, "your mother was treated with singular kindness, and held in high respect; and never was the kindness diminished or the respect withdrawn. In due time one duty after another was undertaken, and well do I remember my admiration of the way in which your mother discharged those of them which fell more immediately to her lot. Her young women's Bible-class was one of the largest and the best conducted that I have ever known; and her domiciliary visitation on behalf of the 'Society for the Relief of the Sick and Poor,' brought her into general repute. She obtruded herself nowhere, but she was welcome everywhere. Her voice was not always heard either in regard to the affairs of the church or to affairs outside; but her influence was felt, and proposals were deemed in the fair way of being adopted if they were known to have obtained her sanction and sympathy."

All this is fully confirmed by Mr. Reed:—

"Mrs. Brock was greatly esteemed. Naturally quiet and retiring, she never did harm or caused distress, but sustained her husband nobly in all his work. When, as often happened, his sensitive temperament was over-excited, or he was overtaken by reactions of despondency, and would say, 'My dear, I am wretched, I am such a poor empty thing, I must give it up; I cannot enter the pulpit again,'—then her placid serene piety

would assert its soothing influence,—she would minister encouragement and rouse him again gradually to vigour and hope. She was an excellent housewife, and spared him all cares of that nature, while her quiet religious influence went almost as far as his own upon the matrons and young people of the flock. She was 'lovely in her life,' and he knew how to praise her worthily and to sorrow for her tenderly. He had much of the chivalrous and heroic about him."

The reader by this time will be able to understand how much Mr. Brock needed and how well he could appreciate the influences of such a home as he had now found. His leisure was more carefully guarded; his engagements were better arranged; and his way into an intimate knowledge of his people became more effectually opened. His impulsive purposes were held in abeyance, and his somewhat absolute judgments modified, often by little more than a moment's silence or the quiet mention of some overlooked consideration.

There was, however, no diminution of public labours produced by this gentle guardianship. "His health," the devoted wife writes in a private record of her own musings, about a year after the marriage, "is at present very good; but he works so hard that it must of necessity exhaust his constitution earlier than a less active career would do; and though I never forget this, I cannot urge him to give up any of his plans of usefulness, lest instead of being a help I should prove a hindrance to him in his arduous labours."

Thus strengthened Mr. Brock began to extend his influence beyond his own congregation, and to cheer the ministers in the villages and smaller towns of East Anglia.

It was as much with a view to their benefit as to that of the missionary enterprise that he organised an annual visitation of the neighbouring churches in the name of the Baptist Missionary Society. He found no committee for this purpose in operation, so that his offer to take the labour upon himself was very willingly accepted by the churches in Norwich and throughout Norfolk. The plan which he proposed, and for many years pursued, was to secure the services of two men of mark, one of them, if possible, being a missionary, who were requested to repair to Lynn, where they were met by himself and some other minister of the city, and conducted from one town to another on that side of the county until they reached Norwich about noon on Saturday. Having there preached on Sunday, and attended a public meeting on Monday, they issued forth on a second week's tour among the remaining churches, terminating at Diss, and thence departing by coach to their several home duties on the following Sunday.

Arduous as this work often proved to be, it was not difficult for Mr. Brock to induce his friends to join him in it. He was personally so popular among the country churches that the strangers were heartily welcomed for his sake, and the tone and spirit of the successive deputations had, in the course of time, produced so deep a

religious impression—often leading to individual conversions and general revival—that the visit was regarded in many of those quiet places as the great event of the year. The public means of locomotion were at that time so inconvenient and uncertain that he made the party independent of them altogether by hiring an open carriage accommodating four persons, which he took care to have horsed in the best possible style. The owners knew that, as he never resigned the reins to another, and was sure to visit the stable at night to see that justice had been done, they might safely intrust him with their choicest steeds. Some of the rural fathers did sometimes intimate that it was hardly becoming in the representatives of humble missionaries to dash in such fashion over their echoing streets, but he would soothe their honest scruples by reminding them that he was bound by Divine law to be "merciful," and that he could not be so, considering what he had to carry, unless he drove one of the best horses in the county. "Those drives," he used to say, "with my brethren all around me, were some of the pleasantest things of my life. The visit was an annual blessing to us all."

Grief, of course, was not long in mingling with his joys, enriching his heart and giving additional discrimination and tenderness to his ministry. He records how the clouds which overcast the opening of one year grew thicker as it advanced.

"JOURNAL: *January* 1837.—This month has been dis-

tinguished by great depression of spirits, occasioned by the weather and circumstances which the weather produced. The great event of the month, however, has been Mr. Youngman's death and funeral. Poor Youngman! my soul loved him! He often instructed me; often helped me; sometimes comforted me. I visited him on his bed of languishing, ascertaining to my intense satisfaction that he was 'looking unto Jesus' and finding rest in his soul. No heresy or heterodoxy now!

> "Nothing in my hands I bring,
> Only to Thy cross I cling."

So he sang as his end was drawing near. Just before it was actually reached he said to me, "We have talked of many things, some of them very strange and even startling for Christian men to have talked about, but the only thing which interests or concerns me now is this: 'It is a faithful saying that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.' How glad that avowal made me! Wide as had been the circumference of my friend's thinking and theorising, its centre had been the cross of Christ. I feel his loss very deeply. God bless the fatherless and the widow!"

While yet saddened by the close of this remarkable friendship, he was called to a scene of similar complexion.

"*January* 30*th.*—Sent for to Mr. Norton's, who was believed to be dying. Went notwithstanding all my arrangements were disarranged; and truly, from the

time of my arrival to that of my departure on the second day after, I never spent a more interesting season. In the midst of extreme pain he was happy, and bore joyful testimony to the supports of the Gospel. The scene did me good of the best kind.

"*February 17th.*—Went to Beckenham to the funeral of Mr. N——. On my arrival found a large number of the neighbouring farmers and gentlemen, of whom I feared that many knew little of Christ. With this feeling I went with them to the grave, where I attempted to direct them to the Cross. The Lord sanctify the appeal!

"*Sunday, 19th.* — In the afternoon and evening preached to very attentive congregations. The Lord was good to me as usual. The congregations each time included the gentlemen above referred to; and again I say, God be merciful to them and bless them!"

The previous autumn had been signalised by the birth of his first-born, in whom the spark of life at first flickered so faintly that all the authorities in the anxious home thought that it could not retain its hold. "But," said the father, in a letter written long afterwards to the boy, "I sought Divine interposition in the extremity, and thanks be unto God, my joy at your being born into the world was not the joy of an hour or of a day, but the joy of years and years until now!"

Mrs. Brock had been sustained at this season of domestic interest by the presence of her mother; but she, soon after her return home, gave signs of declining health, which, as the summer advanced, became

alarming, and her daughter hastened to her side. The announcement of the intended journey was made in a letter marked by true sympathy, and full of considerations fitted to cheer a soul tending to sadness.

MR. BROCK TO MRS. BLISS.

"*July* 24, 1837.—Much as I shall mourn my Mary's absence from me, yet most cheerfully do I send her to you, with the earnest hope that you may be comforted and cheered by her presence. She will tell you of our Heavenly Father's kindness in days past; she will remind you of the grace which He has always afforded to you when affliction has been your portion; she will assure you that we shall soon be re-united in the paradise of God. My prayers shall follow her that she may be a messenger of mercy to you daily, and a source of comfort to every one.

"What reason, my dear mother, have you for being resigned! First of all, you have a good hope through grace that your sins are forgiven, that you are accepted in the Beloved, and that a departure hence will be an entrance into everlasting bliss. You have, I doubt not, been thinking of heaven; but it will bear thinking of again and again, and the more you think of it the more tranquil and happy will you be. Are you drawing near to perfect knowledge, to perfect holiness, to perfect and unending joy? Are you soon to be with your Saviour—with Him who wept over Jerusalem, and who shed His precious blood for our salvation? Are you about to see Him face to face. to behold His glory, to hear His voice

in all its tenderness welcoming you to His heart? Then surely you may be happy—you are happy! Yes; for however one may dread the act of dying, and however, in that dread, we may lose the joy of anticipating heaven, yet there are considerations by which even the dread of dying may be mightily alleviated if not removed. Will He who has been kind to you throughout life forsake you then? Will He who in six troubles, yea, in seven, hath borne you through, fail and forsake you in that extremity? Is it like Him—is it like Christ to forsake you at such a moment? With our emergency His attention to us increases, and as our day so is the strength which He affords. Blessed sympathising Saviour! Thou never leavest Thy believing ones, and therefore Thou wilt not leave our mother when she walketh through the valley of the shadow of death. Not Thou, adored be Thy mercy! With more of tenderness than the tenderest of us, Thou wilt pour consolation into her heart when her heart and her flesh shall fail! Wherefore be prevailed upon to trust, and not be afraid, even of the act of dying. 'The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms.' Good-bye, beloved mother, good-bye. Your being the parent of my precious wife—your kindness in giving her to me—your kindness ever since I have known you—all rush in upon my mind at the present moment. I will think of you—I will pray for you—I will do and think everything in proof that I am your faithfully attached and affectionate son."

The anticipations of this letter were realised in a few weeks afterwards. Mrs. Bliss departed suddenly and tranquilly. Without having disturbed any one near her, it was found, one morning, that she had fallen asleep in Jesus. Mr. Brock had the highest regard and love for her, and in writing to his son observed, "Pure and undefiled religion was the chosen safeguard and ornament of your mother's home at Pensile."

The congregation had now obtained a large infusion of fresh life, and some of the younger men proposed an enlargement of the chapel; but their elders were so much attached to the neat and tasteful little edifice, erected under the eye of their former pastor, that they would not entertain the proposal, and their minister was too wise to precipitate what was sure to come of its own accord in a little while. He succeeded at once, however, in having an evening substituted for an afternoon service. There were good arguments on both sides of that question, but the change was followed by so many interesting results that every one was eventually satisfied. An audience of a more miscellaneous kind was obtained, and the ministry insensibly assumed a more varied character. Subjects arising out of common life, or relating to public questions and prevalent social discussions, were handled in a manner calculated to interest the most careless persons, and to win their confidence in religious teachers. He endeavoured not to assume too much acquaintance with the Bible on the part of these hearers, but never on a single occasion did he fail to

make them distinctly understand that his object was to leave them at the cross of Christ. "The force and tender seriousness of his addresses, with his straightforward manner," says one who knew him well at this time, "produced a great impression on men of energy and thought; and many of the leading citizens of the old city were made to tremble, like Felix, and to rally round him. I have heard many say, 'He compels us to listen and think, for he speaks as if he meant it.'"

The character of these discourses may be very well gathered from the condensed form in which a series of four of them appeared in a little book, published anonymously through the Religious Tract Society, called "Fraternal Appeals to Young Men." That these were appreciated by different minds to those for which they were intended, the reader will be interested in learning from the following friendly acknowledgment from Dr. Stanley, then Bishop of Norwich:—

"PALACE, NORWICH, *January* 15, 1840.

"DEAR SIR,—I feel much obliged by your excellent little work addressed to young men. I have read the whole with much interest, but more particularly the opening chapter on Scepticism, which is drawn up with a spirit and originality well adapted to make the desired impression. I should add that some others who have read it have been equally pleased.—I remain, yours faithfully, E. NORWICH.

"Rev. W. Brock, St. George's."

Gratifying as it must have been to the author to have the argumentative part of his first literary attempt confirmed by so competent a judge, still more welcome were occasional announcements, such as the one which follows, that his highest object had, by God's grace, been gained. "Some months ago," wrote a young man to him on November 26, 1840, "a friend of mine very kindly lent me a little book, entitled 'Fraternal Appeals to Young Men,' of which I believe you are the author. I promised to peruse it more with the view of finding fault than of benefiting my soul; but I was so struck with the vivid picture you have drawn of the way in which many spend their days, and the awful consequences of persisting in such a course of life, that it led me (where I am sorry to admit I was seldom or never found) to the footstool of the Most High; and I record it with joy that I believe I have now an interest in the blood of Christ. And as you have been the instrument in God's hands to convince me of my sinfulness and in leading me to the only Refuge for sinners, Jesus Christ the righteous, I shall ever gratefully remember you, and pray that you may be preserved and stimulated to fresh exertions."

Chapter Eighth.

"When foemen watch their tents by night,
And mists hang wide o'er moor and fell,
Spirit of counsel and of might,
Their pastoral warfare guide Thou well!"
—*Keble.*

MOST of the readers of this Memoir will be aware that when Robert Hall published his work on "Terms of Communion," he met no despicable opponent in his friend and former pupil, Joseph Kinghorn.

Mr. Hall, with a special view to the churches of his own denomination, assailed the general practice in Christendom of making baptism a pre-requisite to participation of the Lord's Supper, and in doing so took up the position "that no man or set of men can claim to prescribe as an indispensable condition of communion what the New Testament has not enjoined as a condition of salvation." To this Mr. Kinghorn responded, that while no human authority was entitled to prescribe terms of communion to the Church of Christ, there was in the prevalent practice no deviation from the divine commandments.

The controversy thus opened, spread in a fairly courteous spirit over several years, and then ended with due admiration of the genius of the one combatant and the

close logic of the other, but without visible change in popular practice—the Eastern and the Western, together with nearly all Protestant Churches, continuing to maintain what is called "strict communion:" that is, to insist on what each considers to be baptism as the initiatory step to membership. A very large number of individuals, however, in all communions, and an increasing number of churches included in the Baptist denomination, hold with Mr. Hall that nothing may be demanded for membership in a Christian church but the character of a Christian. These do not, and have no reason to impute to others a less catholic spirit than their own, but they consider that their practice is a more faithful expression of that spirit, and above all, the only one in harmony with the general principles of the Apostolic instructions.

Such, at all events, was Mr. Brock's conviction, after very full consideration, from the beginning to the close of his public life. When invited, therefore, to undertake the charge of a congregation which had long enjoyed the ministry and still profoundly venerated the character of Mr. Kinghorn, he naturally expressed the fear that his views on that subject would render him unsuited to the position. The Church considered the objection, but overruled it: requiring simply that he should do and say nothing to effect an alteration in the existing order; and to that condition it was perhaps not surprising that he, in his ardour and inexperience, agreed. But it was an agreement full of perils; for as

he afterwards said, "Who was to decide, on the one hand, what was meant by disturbing the order of the Church, and who could undertake, on the other, not to preach and act so as that the order would not be disturbed?"

It was not long before the inconvenience and impracticability of the compact was felt to a very painful degree by both parties. Below the gladsome notes of thanksgiving for the general progress of the congregation there ran the deep bass of suspicion and imputation, which became at last so embarrassing that Mr. Brock resolved at all hazards to obtain release from a promise which had been as unwisely exacted as it had been unwisely given. He therefore, in the fifth year of his pastorate, resigned his office absolutely. He had not intimated any conditions under which, if it should be again offered, he would accept it; but after full discussion, it was offered and ultimately accepted free from any engagement but the reasonable one that he would not admit persons to the communion or membership of the Church without the sanction of the Church itself. His teaching was thus free; but what was to be done with those who did not consider it to be their duty to be baptized in the sense in which the Church understood baptism, but who were unwilling to sever themselves from the ministry which had been blessed to their conversion and growth in grace? These he invited to a commemorative service held at stated intervals in his own house. After

the lapse of about five years, increasing numbers led to the removal of this little company to the chapel, where it met at distinct times from the stated monthly celebration. This was done with the consent of the Church; but some of the trustees having objected to it, on the ground of its inconsistency with the terms of the deed under which they held the property, a case was submitted to eminent legal counsel for an opinion, and that opinion pronouncing the practice to be in harmony with the trust, the agitation was arrested, and peace regained the ascendancy.*

During the progress of a controversy which occasioned him extreme anxiety, and demanded great patience and self-control, Mr. Brock received a very pressing request to undertake the charge of another church. Two similar propositions had previously been made to him—the first, to succeed Dr. Price at Devonshire Square, London, and the second, to become secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society in the room of the Rev. John Dyer; but while each of these had its attractions and received serious consideration, the third—a call to the pulpit at Broadmead, Bristol—coming as it did at a time when the communion question had cast its shadows ominously over his path, pro-

* The question, however, was re-opened during the ministry of Mr. Brock's successor, the Rev. George Gould, who with great labour and ability conducted a protracted suit in Chancery to the same conclusion; adding to that public service the editing and publication of all the pleadings in the case. "St. Mary's Norwich Chapel Case." Norwich: Josiah Fletcher. 1860. Pp. 324.

duced in him great "searchings of heart." But these very difficulties turned the scale against his removal. He could not bear the thought of deserting those who partook of his convictions and had sustained him by their advice and sympathy. He stood firm against the urgency with which the suit was prosecuted, and gave himself with redoubled energy to the work before him.

There had been no interruption, however, all this while to the substantial unity of the congregation, nor to the blessing which had been granted to the ministry. The project of enlarging the chapel was carried into effect, and in accordance with an admirable plan it was made to accommodate double the previous number without sacrificing the symmetry which was supposed to have belonged to its original form. The step was fully vindicated by a commensurate congregation, and the only reason for regret which remained was that the change had not been earlier accomplished.

A field of exertion beyond the limits of his congregation soon presented itself to Mr. Brock in an unexpected quarter. The great struggle for the abolition of West Indian slavery, which had educated more than one generation of young men for public action, after having come to an apparent close was re-opened for a sharp final contest. "From the 1st day of August 1834," says the review of the circumstances which occurs in the Reminiscences, "liberty was declared throughout our West Indian Colonies; but it was prospective rather than present liberty. A scheme of

apprenticement had been devised, according to which the slaves were to be reckoned and dealt with as servants under bond to their masters for a given period. Laws were enacted and organisations instituted for the working of the apprenticeship, in accordance with righteousness and fairness to all who were concerned. But the discovery was presently made that the apprentices were no better off than when they had been slaves. The old temper of tyranny, which had distinguished the planters for generations, was distinguishing them still. It seemed, indeed, as if their tyranny was exasperated by the fact that freedom, though postponed, had been authoritatively and definitively decreed. At any rate, they behaved themselves tyrannically, setting at defiance the plainest requirements of the apprenticeship law, and repeating, if not surpassing, the cruelties and inhumanities which that law expressly proscribed. The cry was raised, in the colonies and at home, for the repeal of the law, and for the enactment forthwith of freedom, *unconditionally and out and out.* Now came a struggle as for life and death. By the planters, of course, unconditional freedom was laughed to scorn; by politicians of the several schools it was maintained that the apprenticeship scheme should have fair play, and be let alone; by fashionable society it was said that but for the fanaticism of the missionaries, nothing would have been known or heard of the so-called cruelty or inhumanity; and by Parliament itself the greatest unwillingness was shown to discuss the sub-

ject with a view to the demanded change. The old anti-slavery folk were recalled to the council chamber and the field of action. I had been welcomed to their ranks by Joseph John Gurney and Sir Fowell Buxton in particular, at the close, as it was deemed, of their long and arduous warfare, sharing the joy of their glorious victory more than the wearisomeness of their protracted fight. Alas! our brethren who had been in bondage for generations were in bondage still. There was no alternative but to take the field, and at public meetings, through the press, and by such general means as were within reach, to attempt to awaken the sympathy of the nation and to secure its influence. I felt that necessity was laid upon me to devote every hour that I could fairly take from my proper work at St. Mary's in order to accomplish the destruction of that scheme."

The enthusiasm with which he threw himself into this campaign, kindled by his recollections of Knibb's eloquence, and sustained by a correspondence with him which ripened into sympathy and friendship, was intense and unsparing. He visited every town in Norfolk, and a good many in Suffolk, holding conferences, delivering lectures, or addressing public meetings; drawing up papers, correcting misstatements in the public journals, arousing the timid, closing the mouths of adversaries, and watching against personal temptations to the violation of truth and charity. The conflict lasted, it will be remembered, for the greater part of four years before the facts were admitted and the decision of the Legis-

lature secured. Sir T. F. Buxton, who had lost his seat for Weymouth a short time before, writing on 23d May 1838, says, "A resolution for the immediate abolition of the apprenticeship was carried last night by a majority of three. The intelligence was received with such a shout by the Quakers, myself among the number, that we strangers were all turned out for rioting." It was a rich moral reward for having expended labour on such an object to be able to participate in the sentiments which the same writer addressed to Mr. Joseph Sturge, by whom largely the movement had been initiated. "I bless God that He, who has always raised up agents such as the crisis required, sent you to the West Indies; I bless Him that during the apprenticeship not one act of violence against the person of a white man has, as I believe, been perpetrated by a negro; and I cannot express my grateful exultation that those whom the colonial law so recently reckoned as brute beasts, 'the fee-simple absolute whereof resided in their owners,' will soon be invested with the full rights of man."[1]

Mr. Reed favours us with the following interesting observations on Mr. Brock's spirit and manner of life at this time:—

"No man regarded more highly than he the holy and religious part of the pastor's work. He used to speak of it and pray about it when we ministers were together with trembling accent and serious unction. He told us how he made a habit of reading over privately, at least

[1] Life of Sir T. F. Buxton, p. 428.

once a year, Baxter's 'Reformed Pastor;' he was also wont yearly to remind his people of their mutual vows at the time of his ordination, and with lively pathos to recite and comment on the confession of faith he had then made as the continued faith of his life.

"The personal affection he inspired was very strong and warm. With all his sharp decision, he was so genial; his serious look so soon melted into sympathy for the sorrowing, the young, and the poor; he was so apt in his allusions and illustrations, and so homely and direct in his speech. Large and great he was, but he could stoop so winningly; impetuous and impatient, no doubt, by nature, yet love could calm and tame his force. It was so natural to him to call all his friends and adherents by their Christian names, that he seemed the father of a fond family, and he could do almost anything with them, for he knew both how to command and to reward.

"All over Norwich his name was a household word of respect. His public appearances were chiefly on occasions when popular feeling was excited against wrong or in favour of some great benevolence. He was a most ready speaker and debater, with a vein of pleasantry which flavoured earnest argument. He used to talk very freely in all sorts of society, and thus, as well as by reading, he learned the ideas of all classes of people, and was helped to comprehend the general feeling. He was careful to prepare his speeches as well as his sermons; though in delivery he had the

art of appearing to speak with unpremeditated freedom. On these accounts he was rarely out of harmony with his audience, and his vehement declamation carried all before it.

"Though strong in his expressions, he was rarely rash; and though occasionally hurt at harsh criticism, he was very fair on reflection. On one occasion, after an address in which he spoke of 'thousands' of martyrs in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Mr. Brightwell, one of the best read and most cultivated men in Norwich, objected to the expression as an exaggeration. Mr. Brock defended his words, and the argument grew hot. They parted in displeasure. In the morning Mr. Brock met me at Mr. Alexander's, when, on looking up the authorities, he was convinced that he had overstated the case, upon which he at once went up with me to Mr. Brightwell, who was my deacon, and I shall never forget the noble manner in which the ample apology was made on the one side and received on the other." [1]

This invaluable access to men of diversified positions, attainments, and opinions, receives some explanation from what follows from the same pen:—

"The Old Meeting Book Club was a first-class assembly of leading men—lawyers, doctors, manufacturers—men of wealth and intelligence, who, besides uniting to circulate valuable and expensive books, held also a

[1] After all, there were more martyrs in Elizabeth's reign than those who perished at the block and the stake.—ED.

circulating dinner. As the dinner was a sumptuous feast, the ministers who were members were not expected to give, but only to attend, the entertainments. There was Brightwell, known for his microscopical studies; Donald Dalrymple, late M.P. for Bath, a gentleman of unrivalled gifts in conversation; Willett and Groat, Springfield and Marshall, and other manufacturers; Youngman, Beare, Taylor; with Alexander, Brock, and myself as divines. These symposia were certainly elegant, attractive, and intellectual; and had some Plato or Erasmus done them justice, might have become famous. These gentlemen were mostly Conservative Liberals, and as we belonged to the advanced guard of public opinion, there were often sturdy disputes on criticism and politics. There was always, however, a gentlemanly restraint and goodhumour which prevented offence. Mr. Brock's hilarity and frankness shone upon these occasions, as did also Mr. Alexander's exuberant wit; while we all gained valuable knowledge of men and things, besides access to important literature."

Mr. Brock's acquaintance with new forms of religious life was further extended by the addition to his church of several persons of great intelligence, who had withdrawn from the Society of Friends during the agitation of opinion which prevailed about that time. The friendly Bishop of the diocese also, in the spirit which has descended to his son in the Deanery of Westminster, gave the Nonconformists occasional opportunities of meeting at his table their brethren in the

ministry of the Established Church. That the fullest independence in the expression of opinion was permitted on these occasions, leading only to the best results, may be gathered from a brief correspondence which passed between the two "bishops" regarding a charge of Archdeacon Hare to the clergy of his archdeaconry. The charge had been courteously sent from the Palace in the "belief that, with one or two exceptions, it would give satisfaction on many accounts." Mr. Brock replied in January 30, 1841.

MR. BROCK TO THE BISHOP OF NORWICH.

"I have been much gratified; but there are one or two things on account of which I feel obliged, with all candour and courtesy, to complain. . . . . .

"I regret the apparent reflection which is cast upon the practice of preaching, more especially as that is connected with another very severe reflection on the worship of Dissenters. I refer to the following passage:—'There is too strong a disposition to regard a church as mainly a house of preaching. Indeed, this is the broad distinction between a church and a Dissenting meeting-house. A church is a house of prayer, a meeting-house is a house of preaching.' Now, no one is better aware than your Lordship that it is mainly by the preaching of the Gospel that the great ends of Christianity are to be accomplished. 'Faith cometh by hearing,' and the Gospel is to be 'preached to every creature.' Is it not, then, to be deplored that anything

like depreciation of so paramount and so essential a service should have come from so high a quarter?

"The principal cause of my regret, however, is this, that the Dissenters are represented as deficient in the holy exercise of prayer. Your Lordship, I am sure, will allow me to state concerning our public worship, that on Lord's days two hours are spent in prayer and supplication,—sometimes considerably more, and never less. Such is the practice in my own congregation, and it forms no exception to the general rule. Besides this, there are two services during the week expressly for prayer, extending to an hour or an hour and a half, and a general service, of which prayer is a prominent part. The exclusively devotional service is but once during the week; in a few it is more frequent than with ourselves. How, then, can it be maintained that the 'broad distinction' betweeen us lies in the exercise —the solemn and holy exercise—of prayer?

"I have desired," he says in conclusion, "to express my opinion with becoming respect, but if I have failed, or if, venturing to offer them, I have overstepped the bounds of propriety, I trust to your Lordship's well-known generosity for the forgiveness of my fault."

The confidence thus avowed was not misplaced, for in a week or two the Bishop replied, saying:—"Your calm and candid communication on Archdeacon Hare's charge I forwarded for his perusal, and have much pleasure in sending you his reply, which you would oblige me by returning."

Having been thus returned, the answer can only be conjectured, but that the objections were candidly weighed by that admirable man is plain from the Bishop's closing lines:—

"PALACE, NORWICH, *March* 4, 1841.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I enclose another note from Archdeacon Hare in reply to your last remarks on a passage in his charge. If all Christians differed and discussed their differences in his and your temper, we might hope for a wider diffusion of Christian spirit than now prevails amongst the controversial leaders of the religious world.—I remain, yours faithfully,

E. NORWICH.

"Rev. W. Brock, St. George's."

That Mr. Brock not only knew how to appreciate men of different ecclesiastical position to himself, but could kindle into enthusiasm in their defence, will appear from the following letter addressed to Lady Peto:—

MR. BROCK ON DR. ARNOLD.

"*July* 28, 1845.—I lose no time in answering your inquiry concerning Arnold. It is now more than twelve months since I first read his Life, so that any undue enthusiasm which I felt may be supposed to have passed away, and sober conviction to have taken its place. I have read the Life twice since that time,

comparing one portion of it with another, and judging of the whole from an increasingly accurate acquaintance with its several parts.

"My judgment is most clear and strong that a more monstrous misrepresentation was never made than that which sets Arnold's character forth as unevangelical and unspiritual. I am aware, I think, of the quarter whence the misrepresentation arose—even from the party in the Church of England whose organs are 'The Record' and the 'Christian Observer.' The former periodical has had a series of articles on Arnold's religious character which I have read with unutterable disgust. By means of passages taken out of their connection, it has managed to throw doubt upon his soundness of doctrine and his spirituality of life, whilst by artfully confining itself to his earlier sermons and to his juvenile opinions, it has seemed to make out a strong case for holding his religious excellence in doubt.

"The truth is, my dear friend, Arnold, had a strong aversion to the 'Evangelicals' on account of their narrow-mindedness and sanctimoniousness, tinctured as these two horrid things are with some of the very worst influences of a thing which his great soul loathed — even high-priestism. Of this aversion he made no secret, and hence their calumny that he was a man of questionable orthodoxy. They are not magnanimous enough to do him justice.

"I really feel myself waxing indignant when the

Christianity of such a man is gravely called in question. I think of his lofty independence of the smiles and frowns of the world; I think of the sacrifices which he made for righteousness' sake; I think of the simplicity and godly sincerity in the declaration of revealed truth, in which he so signally excelled; I think of his self-denying assiduity in beseeching the boys at Rugby to yield themselves unto God; I think of his profound veneration for the oracles of God; I think of his pathetic and almost passionate allusions to the necessary aid of the Holy Spirit; I think of his letters and his sermons and his journals, until I rejoice for the sake of my claim to forbearance and meekness that his calumniators are not within the reach of my voice!

"Let the following quotations be carefully compared with the doubts to which your note refers. 'What is it to live unto God? May God open my eyes to see Him by faith, in and through His Son Jesus Christ; may He draw me to Him and keep me with Him,—making His will my will, His love my love, His strength my strength; and may He make me feel that pretended strength, not derived from Him, is no strength, but the worst weakness. May His strength be perfected in my weakness' (vol. ii. p. 2).

"And then, my dear friend, let the last entry ever made in his diary be remembered, closing with these beautifully simple words: 'But, above all, let me mind my own personal work, to keep myself pure and zealous and believing, labouring to do God's will, yet not anxious that

it should be done by me rather than by others, if God disapproves of my doing it.' And then, some of his prayers: 'O Lord, keep Thyself present to me always, and teach me to come to Thee by the one and living way, Thy Son Jesus Christ.' 'Bless this school, that it may be a place of godly education, to Thy glory and the salvation of our own souls. Fill us with Thy Holy Spirit, that we may labour in our several duties towards one another and towards Thee, as befits those whom Thou hast redeemed by the blood of Thy dear Son.'

"I might go on *ad infinitum* in adducing evidence most triumphant that Arnold was an unquestionably pre-eminent Christian. I have just now read the account of his death, and with the tear of admiring gratitude yet falling from my eye, I say, 'Let my last end be like his.'"

Chapter Ninth.

"God did anoint thee with His odorous oil
To wrestle, not to reign."
—*E. B. Browning.*

MR. BROCK had convictions both clear and deep on the subject of the national establishment of religion. When the "Voluntary Church Society," which based its action on religious considerations, was formed, about the time he entered on public life, he gave his heartfelt adhesion to it; and when at a later period that association gave place to one with a wider foundation, now known as the "Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control," he gave to it a not less earnest support. "I deemed it religiously incumbent on me," he said, "to take part in the agitation whenever a legitimate opportunity occurred; necessity seemed laid upon me to insist upon it that Christ's kingdom is not of this world."

Thus conscientiously opposed to the principle of an Established Church, he felt bound to resist all the exactions which arose out of its operation, and was once involved in one of those irritating church-rate contests which are now happily for ever ended. The parish of St. George's, in which he lived, included a large number

of Nonconformists, and for several years they had formed a majority in the vestry and refused to grant a church-rate. They showed, however, that their opposition was to the principle of compulsion, and not to the expense which a rate would have entailed, by offering to contribute voluntarily whatever was shown to be requisite.

"To this," says Mr. Brock in a letter giving an account of the matter, "our church neighbours would not consent, declaring that unless the rate was granted after the due ecclesiastical manner they would not give a penny.[1] Thus the affair was postponed until the condition of the church edifice and the churchyard became so disreputable that the Archdeacon interfered officially, serving the parish with a notice that measures would be taken to punish the refusal of a church-rate. We were summoned to hear what Mr. Archdeacon had to say, and then to act accordingly. At the proper moment I proposed an adjournment of the meeting for twelve months, which was tantamount to a motion for the rejection of the rate. My proposal was adopted by a large majority. It was then moved and carried that the parish should be polled with a view to a more satisfactory decision of the question. The poll was

[1] One of the churchwardens stated in the Archdeaconry Court that "the Dissenters had subscribed, but the Churchmen would not, and that he had, therefore, carried the money back to the Dissenters." The Committee of Archdeacons, however, determined "not to submit to the conduct of the Dissenters any longer."—"The Church Expositor," December 1844.

taken the next day, and the outcome was a yet larger majority against the rate.

"The Archdeacon was indignant, and proceeded to enforce what he presumed to be the law. Six of the leading opponents of the rate were selected, against whom the enforcement was to be carried on. My name was found among the six. It occurred to the Archdeacon to call on me, to remonstrate privately, and if possible to prevail on me to give up my opposition. 'Why,' said he to me, 'you will certainly be sent to jail; and what will Norwich and Norfolk say to that?' 'What they may say,' I answered, 'I cannot tell; but I am sure of this, that be it what it may, it will be to the detriment of your cause, and the benefit of mine.' 'Yes,' he rejoined, 'but the idea of a Christian minister like you being shut up in prison!' 'Exactly,' I replied, 'and the idea of a Christian minister like you causing me to be shut up there!' The interview ended with the assurance that the prosecution must take its course. However, when the actual citation came from the ecclesiastical court of Canterbury, it was found that my name had been omitted, and only five of the parishioners were summoned to answer the articles of accusation 'touching and concerning their soul's health and the lawful correction and reformation of their errors and excesses.' Of course we resolved to stand by them."

"A great indignation meeting," Mr. Reed informs us, "was held, when Mr. Brock was the chief speaker. While

inveighing against the idea that a parishioner could not legally vote against, as well as for, a proposed church-rate, he referred to the famous demand by Charles I. for the 'five' members of the House of Commons, describing the king's tyrannous attempt and his ignominious defeat amid deafening cheers. He concluded a most eloquent speech by saying: 'We are ready for two things: first to have a solemn argument before the courts of law as to what is the fact of the law, and then, if the law be against us, to put forth such a demonstration of our common demand as shall deliver us and our children after us for ever from this harassing position.' The Court of Arches gave judgment against the parishioners; but when that was followed by an utter reversal of the sentence by Lord Denman in the Court of Queen's Bench, the most enthusiastic interest accompanied the suit to the glorious acquittal and vindication. It is singular that this parish was so saturated with Free Church ideas, that when the Anti-State Church Society arose, delegates were actually sent from the vestry to separate Church and State."

That Mr. Brock was not impelled by merely sectarian and party considerations, came out broadly, soon after this, in his efforts to correct the political profligacy for which the city had unhappily become famous, and in which some assailable members of his own congregation were involved.

"He deserves," says Mr. Reed, "the credit of being the first publicly to attack the inveterate custom of

political bribery in Norwich. After long and anxious deliberation, we ministers resolved, on the approach of an election, to warn our churches that we should not pass over or connive at such a serious offence against morality, but should certainly make it a subject of church discipline. This notice was given by each of us, and it aroused, as we feared, a storm of objection. 'What sin was there,' it was asked, 'in selling a vote? Is it not my own? If I help the member, why should he not help me? I shall be turned out of house and property if I refuse? What has the Gospel to do with politics? Where does the Bible condemn this practice?'"

The afflictive depression produced by this state of public morals has left some touching and instructive traces in the journal.

JOURNAL.

"*July* 21, 22.—Preparing for Sunday with a heavy heart because of the prevailing iniquity of the city through the election.

"*Sunday, 23d.*—A good day, and I trust useful. I felt very anxious for every professor of religion that he might keep himself unspotted from the world. O Lord, sympathise with Thy servant!

"*25th.*—Day of election. Discord, bloodshed, and awful treachery characterised the proceedings of both parties. I would sigh and cry for all the abominations done in the midst of us. Leave not the Church, O Lord, because of our sins, but O come and sanctify and save!

"*26th.*—Visited some sick friends. Preached with truly melancholy feelings from what I had heard regarding the election. We are a second Sodom!

"*27th.*—Grievously interrupted all day. Grievously affected, too, by what I again heard of utter destitution of principle even among professors of religion.

"31*st.*—Pleased to hear that in three instances the sermon of the 23d was instrumental in keeping members of the church from receiving the wages of unrighteousness, and in one instance of keeping a respectable man in the congregation from offering them.

"Prayer and church-meeting in the evening. At the latter exceedingly distressed by fresh disclosures at the election. O Lord, help us to discover the guilty, and strengthen us to do Thy will!"

"*August* 8. *Letter to his Wife.*—Our bribery cases in the church are going on better than we feared. Only one case of exclusion will take place, but several of severe reproof before the church. This, of course, will devolve a painful duty upon me, but in Divine strength I hope to get through. But what ought I to be? You know a little what, alas, I am! Who am I to reprove another? I assure you that but for the grace of Christ I would refuse to do it. *Do pray for me in this respect.*"

"*August* 15*th.*—Low, very low. I know not, indeed, how to proceed. I would fain hide my head in some secluded village, and there labour unknown and un-

seen. What am I, O Lord, and what my father's house?

"21*st.*—Depression still continues. Oh, who can tell the deep anxiety of a minister situated as I am?

"31*st.*—Heard of an abusive attack upon me, for having denounced bribery, in one of the newspapers. I am indeed sure that to be an intrepid preacher of righteousness requires more than human nature can supply. Oh, for grace to 'endure' through evil and good report 'unto the end.'"

"It became evident," Mr. Reed further says, "that the views of Christian professors were demoralised by long habit, and that the subject required vigorous and prudent illumination. We arranged a course of lectures on the subject, of which Mr. Brock was to deliver the first. This was the first time the sin of bribery had been openly denounced. The city was in commotion. The party leaders were either enraged or full of scoffing ridicule. Our own congregations were divided. Many had been in the habit of looking forward to this windfall for paying their debts or increasing their pleasures. There was a probability of opposition and open resistance. The evening came amid much anxiety. We proceeded to my church, the venerable Old Meeting, which was crowded by an excited audience."

Mr. Brock opened thus:—

"In undertaking the service of this evening, I quite expect to be misrepresented and misunderstood. By some persons it has been said that the service is alto-

gether a political manœuvre; by others it has been thought that I am taking up a subject with which, as a Christian minister, I have no concern. To the charge of designing and executing a political manœuvre, I deem it neither dignified nor becoming to give a contradiction. Strong in the consciousness of my own integrity, I shall endeavour to discharge an incumbent duty, as well through evil as through good report.

"To the charge of meddling with a subject with which I have no concern, I am induced to pay attention for a moment, in order to rectify an error which extensively prevails, namely, that religious people have no right and no occasion to interfere with politics. Now, understanding by politics those deliberations and transactions which are necessary for the public good, I ask, *why* are we not to interfere with them? Where, in the Holy Scriptures, is the prohibition found? It is true, indeed, that we are cautioned against worldly-mindedness, and we are exhorted to set our affections upon things which are above. But if such cautions and exhortations are to be understood as proscribing and denouncing politics, of course they must be understood as proscribing and denouncing philosophy and literature, and even commerce. If we may not engage in the former because of their irreligious tendency, neither may we engage in the latter; and then, as St. Paul has it, 'we must needs go out of the world.' But we are not to go out of the world. *Amidst* its manifold engagements we are to glorify God; *in* its various

relationships we are to act as becometh the Gospel of Christ."

He then proceeded to set forth very calmly the sin of bribery with its social and political evils, and to handle the excuses made for it with irresistible power.

"What," he asked, "is venality in the judgment of the law? A grave and enormous crime. What is venality considered in itself? A violation of a public trust. What is venality contemplated in its tendencies? Dangerous to the last extreme. If the elector may betray his trust, why may not the juryman betray his —why may not the judge betray his—why may not the executor betray his? Ay, why may not the man to whom you sell yourselves betray his? Tell me, sirs, whether the tendency, as even thus hinted at, of giving and receiving bribes be not sufficiently alarming and portentous to lead you to act with integrity in the disposal of your vote? The temptation may be a very strong one and a very specious one, but your duty is so to act that, at the close of the election, you may ask in the language of the prophet, 'Whom have I oppressed—whom have I perverted—of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?'"

Again:

"If the candidate who gives you money when you have given him, even conscientiously, your vote, be returned to serve in the House of Commons, will he not, think you, endeavour, if he can, to regain the money which he has expended upon you? Will he

stand there the uncompromising and successful opponent of peculation? Will he continue there with patience and perseverance discharging the duties of your representative, and be ever ready to receive, with attention and concern, your petitions or your complaints? *Not he.* Your claim upon him was discharged when you received from him the gift; he paid, though somewhat speciously, for the vote which he received. If, then, you would have a House of Commons characterised by integrity, exercise your franchise with integrity. If you would have your representatives free from the control which gifts and rewards will infallibly exert, keep *yourselves* free from such control. If you would have a body of men constituting the third estate of the realm to whom you may come at any time, for any purpose, and from whom you may invoke *authoritatively* the omnipotence of the British Parliament, refuse to receive from any of them the value of a grain of sand. If they are under obligation to you, which they ought not to be, yet if, as things are, they deem they are under obligation to you, let them discharge the obligation by thoughtful deliberations upon the welfare of the country, and by a steady and patriotic course of conduct in relation to the manifold and ever-multiplying interests of the commonwealth."

Turning to the other side, he demanded:

"Is it not a criminal thing, and a sinful thing, and a most degrading and disgraceful thing, to take advantage of the poverty of a poor man, or of the ignorance of an

ignorant man, or of the wickedness of a wicked man, in order to prevail on him to betray his stewardship, in order to induce him to violate his trust? By whatever party this is done, it is an enormous crime; by whatever person it is perpetrated, it is an offence neither to be justified nor excused."

The manuscript of this bold address was requested by his friends for universal distribution; "and," Mr. Reed continues, "from this time on the Liberal side no candidate appeared without *professions* of purity, though these were often violated. At the next election one of the party leaders even called on Mr. Brock and asked his influence with some of the members of his church, and said, 'If they vote for us, it will be something handsome for you.' 'Do you mean to insult me, sir?' he exclaimed. 'Oh no,' was the response; 'where's the harm? I know all about your lecture, but you know that won't do when an election is up!' 'Pray, sir, leave my house at once before I get angry,' implored the pastor; 'and as it was,' he said, in telling us the circumstance, 'I had almost kicked the fellow out.'"[1]

From these needful but painful services he was called away to bear part in a novel system of evangelisation, which was thoroughly agreeable to his tastes. Mr.

[1] Mr. Reed adds: "While the brunt of this early opposition to bribery was borne by the Liberal party, yet in recent days on them has fallen the chief odium of the practice. Mr. Tillett and some of the younger citizens were Mr. Brock's earnest upholders from the first. They formed 'vigilance committees' to watch and expose all corruption at elections."

afterwards Sir S. Morton Peto, having undertaken the construction of certain railways in East Anglia, was at this time in the habit of spending a considerable part of the year in the neighbourhood of Norwich, and, with his family, joined Mr. Brock's congregation. It will afterwards appear how many important movements turned upon the friendship which was thus formed; but it is only now to be noted, that, in the course of frequent conversations, the practicability was discussed of attempting something which might serve to interest and improve the large number of labourers employed on the works then in progress. They were part of that peculiar body of men which had been gradually formed during a long course of years for employment in the construction, first of navigable canals, and then of railways, and called, from their earlier occupation, "navvies." They were drawn from diverse parts of the British islands, and professed in some instances hostile forms of religion, but were distinguished chiefly by extreme ignorance, and all but total spiritual insensibility. They had, at the same time, a common life and an unwritten law affecting their relations to each other, their employers, and the rest of the world. That they were accessible to kind attentions, clearly disinterested, followed from their being men, but they required to be approached with the greatest caution and patience. Mr. Brock's wide and various sympathy, joined with his friend's steady support, led, under the divine blessing, to measures which proved very successful. Mr. Peto

constructed commodious halls capable of being moved onward as the line of railway advanced, affording comfortable shelter for the men in their leisure hours, and furnished with books and publications, supplying amusement, useful information, and religious knowledge. To give life to this apparatus, Christian men, carefully selected, mingled familiarly with the rude but grateful toilers, helping them to read and write, encouraging them to acquire self-command, and above all, especially when they were convened on Sundays, presenting and pressing home upon them the words of eternal life.

Mr. Brock had liberty to draw on the "Railway Mission account at the Norwich Bank" to any extent that he found necessary, and in a short time he had a body of the best men, he was accustomed to say, that he ever knew, at work upon all the chief points of the lines. No part of his now extended labours gave him greater delight than superintending these missionaries, reading their weekly journals, arranging their periodical movements, counselling and comforting them in their difficulties, and visiting them, sometimes apart, and at other times at conferences for united consultation and prayer, held at Yarmouth, Ely, or March.

Results of the best character, of which the record is on high, arose out of these operations.

Chapter Tenth.

"It was their escort through the foaming flood
And pathless desert: in that misty screen
God's presence was enshrined, Himself unseen."
—*Wilton.*

THERE is evidence of great gloom having fallen over the pastor's heart during the winter of 1845–46. The church was peaceful and the congregations were undiminished, so that to a superficial observer all was prosperous; but to him it seemed that life was wanting, and that the indescribable reciprocation of spiritual interest between teacher and taught, which accompanies life, had suffered interruption. The deep depression which ensued had at least the advantage of prompting to unusual earnestness in prayer; and the answer, upon which he always calculated, was not long delayed.

It came, however, not quite in the way he anticipated. One of the causes of the condition he deplored lay undoubtedly in his own physical state. He always worked under pressure, and for some time had undertaken special labours, which had exhausted his nervous energy beyond the point at which such work as that of a pastor can be truly performed. He needed

the refreshment of a journey which should stretch beyond the atmosphere of his cares, and call forth the faculties of observation rather than those of thought. He had once before tasted the charming alterative of a Continental tour, and that was again opportunely offered to him by one whose acquaintance he had shortly before made, but who became and continued to the end of his life one of his choicest friends.

His wife and his church gladly assenting, he embarked, with Mr. Kemp, on the 26th of June for a journey through France and Italy. Such a tour was not quite the trifle thirty years ago that it is now. The railway, it is true, was already known on the Continent, but there were large spaces which it had not touched. The two friends experienced whatever joy belonged to a journey by diligence from Dieppe to Paris, and from Paris to Lyons, and thence by *malle-poste* to Marseilles. Yet even that part of the way was not without incident. In a letter to his elder boy, then at Totteridge school, he gives this striking account of a storm:—

"We presently came out upon the valley of the Isère, from some points of which Mont Blanc is distinctly visible, though at a distance of seventy miles. The weather had become unfavourable as we approached the valley, and the evening had so far set in that we could not see that mighty giant. The ridge of the Alps of Dauphiné, however, was quite plain. About eight o'clock we heard the thunder rolling among a range of hills at our right hand, with loud and appalling sound.

The clouds gathered, and assumed such an aspect of sternness and wrath, that, I am ready to admit to you, I was awed, if not dismayed. Never did I look out upon the heavens when they so portentously threatened the destruction of all that was beneath. For a while the storm raged at some distance, but it gradually came towards, and at length completely surrounded us. It seemed to me as though our carriage was just the centre of the tempestuous scene. The rain was pouring down in torrents; the thunder kept on for hours bursting as on our very heads, in volleys and peals of stupendous and frightful power. The lightning gleamed and flashed across our path, into our vehicle, along the distant horizon, amid the gorges in the mountains—at intervals, indeed, at every point of vision which we could command. For several seconds the whole heavens were illumined perfectly; and on becoming again darkened, stars and bolts and bars of fire were scattered or flung out by the clouds above us with bewildering rapidity and terrific force.

"As I was looking southwards, wondering what form the fires of heaven would assume next, there came from a huge mass of cloud a body of fire which appeared to my eye to resemble the setting sun on a summer evening. It was quite as large, but far more red and fierce. As I gazed it exploded into a thousand parts and a thousand forms, leaving me so completely subdued that I wrapped myself up as best I could in the drapery around me, and communed with my Heavenly Father in

solemn prayer. I never felt myself more than once before so near to an eternal world. Mercifully we all escaped the danger. Towards morning we passed through the city of Avignon, but too early to see any of its objects of interest. Oh, the joy with which, about noon, we hailed the Mediterranean at Marseilles!"

Other letters followed to the same young correspondent, full of information on those countries. It is not necessary to repeat them; but the following summary, which formed a kind of index to the whole may, like the harmonious passages which Milton weaves out of nothing but famous names, be not without interest to those who have trodden that classic ground:—

"From Marseilles we took steamer for Leghorn. We had a run up to Pisa, and returned for the steamer to Civita Vecchia. There we hired a carriage, which took us to Rome, over fifty miles of the worst roads I had ever seen. After a few days in Rome, which we employed most diligently, we returned to Civita Vecchia, where we went on board a steamer for Naples. The passage was all we could desire; specially through the active eruption of Vesuvius, which we could plainly discern when we were forty or fifty miles from the harbour. The Bay of Naples, with the volcano in full force of fire and smoke and noise, was a magnificent thing to see.

"The several museums of Naples were visited, and examined to some good purpose, as we had a most intelligent friend, who could take us to the more impor-

tant objects, which had been brought there from the excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum, and who could explain them to us accurately and in full. In one museum Mr. Kemp and I spent some hours alone, and we exchanged no remark all the time. We were just struck dumb. We visited the famous grotto at Capri; we spent a night on Vesuvius; and we visited Sorrentum and Puteoli. Our time requiring speed, we left Naples for Leghorn and Genoa by steamer. After a rough and tedious passage, we reached the former place on a Saturday night, and stayed a Sunday there. By the same steamer we went on to Genoa. Thence we coached it to Milan, remained one day, and passed on to Chiavenna, by the beautiful Lake of Como.

"From Chiavenna we travelled by diligence over the Splugen Pass, and by the 'Via Mala' to Coire, whence, by land and water, we reached Zurich. Then, through Mannheim and down the Rhine, we got on to Cologne. By rail we journeyed to Ostend, where a steamer was waiting for passengers to Ramsgate; and on a magnificent summer morning, about nine o'clock, Mr. Kemp and I landed in Old England, immensely to our delight."

Much as this tour had enlarged and refreshed his mind, it was too short to produce complete restoration of health; for after plunging again into labours in the Church and in public affairs, he was arrested by a serious local affection. The early winter months of 1847 brought pain and deficient sight to the left eye, which

compelled him to seek the aid of an oculist. The measures which were adopted led to the removal of pain, but not to the extinction of the disease. It shortly afterwards revealed itself in a worse form than before. "I was recommended," runs a note, which says much in small compass, "to go to London, with a view to the best professional advice and treatment that could be obtained. On hearing of my purpose, Mr. and Mrs. Peto most kindly invited me to be their guest, urging that Mrs. Brock should accompany me, for the greater comfort of all. Arrangements were made accordingly, and we took up our temporary abode in Russell Square. It happened that the oculist whom we had selected lived only a few doors off. His opinion was that the case was a serious one, and that the treatment, to be successful, must be severe. We put ourselves into his hands for better or for worse, and the measures began. Mr. Brownfield's had been nothing to them. Bleeding, blistering, cupping, salivating, constituted the course.

"It was most formidable, and put every virtue and every grace to an unwonted test. But for my wife's admirable patience and quiet faith, I must have given up. One day when, some operation having been too much for her nerves, she fainted, I felt my dependence on her. I was just like a little child till she came round again. Her voice seems still audible as she said, when just recovering, 'I shall do now; let me hold your head. I am sorry I was so foolish as to faint.' And then, exactly as if she had not fainted, she took up her

nursing where it had been left off, much to the admiration of the surgeon, who handed me over to her care.

"The eye improved gradually, and at the end of three weeks I was directed to seek change of air and scene for a fortnight. Then Mr. Ware would examine me again, and prescribe according to the symptoms. We went to Barnstaple for the fortnight, and greatly did we enjoy our visit. My wife had not visited my relatives before, but she was instantly and most pleasantly at home. The aged couple took to her wonderfully, and my mother was simply overjoyed.

"The change wrought most beneficially, and at the fortnight's end we were back in Russell Square. Mr. Ware pronounced favourably, and after a few days dismissed me with certain cautions and directions. We reached Norwich on the 30th of April, and I went to work immediately. For a good while I preached, as to the language of my sermons, impromptu, writing having become too great a labour for my eye."

The shadow of this affliction was to fall across his path again; but in the meanwhile a trial of a different character and of greater intensity met him in the course of the summer. The pen to which the narrative has been already so much indebted shall be left to describe it:—

"The independence of his principles," says Mr. Reed, "was now to be exposed to as rough a test as almost ever has occurred to a public man. At the second election for which Mr. Peto stood, the Dissenters had

become so conscious of power and so sanguine of success, that (as the event proved, mistakenly) they resolved to vote for no candidate who would not promise to support in Parliament the separation of Church and State. Now into this policy Mr. Brock and most of the Norwich Dissenters entered heartily; but Mr. Peto disapproved of it, and refused to be bound by such a pledge, while he fully avowed his Dissenting principles. It was a most serious position for Mr. Brock, and his heart was very sore over the dilemma. But he steadily held by the policy of his party, and joined in inviting Sergeant Parry to stand in opposition to his friend Mr. Peto. When the election came, he and the majority of the Dissenters on that ground voted for Parry and against Peto, and had the mortification of finding themselves beaten by the man they had rejected. Mr. Brock's chagrin was very great. Few men have given a more undoubted pledge of their loyalty to truth against temptations of the strongest order than Mr. Brock did at this crisis."

The opinion expressed in the last sentence is that of one who approved of the step which had been taken, but Dr. Thomas Price, at that time editor of the "Eclectic Review," who in several earnest letters to Mr. Brock had advised a different course, reiterates the same sentiment in these words:—"I feel deeply for your position in the matter, and honour, beyond what words can express, the integrity with which you have acted."

"Sorely," wrote Mr. Brock on the subject, "did all this trouble me: the more so a great deal because the two newspapers, Whig and Tory, held me up to public reprobation for thus requiting a man who had been to me such a generous benefactor and friend. Letters reached me from many quarters, particularly from Conservative Dissenting quarters, wondering at my procedure, and suggesting that I should immediately amend my ways. I could not explain everything to everybody, but my rejoicing was this: the testimony of my conscience that I was right."

Among the distressful entries in the brief journal of the period are these two:—

JOURNAL: "*July* 29.—Arose as to a day of sore trial; knew what is meant by the 'cutting off of a right hand;' voted for Parry and went at once to the country.

"*Aug.* 2.—Spent the day at Yarmouth to be out of the way of the chairing. After retiring to bed was awoke by a messenger from Mr. Peto with a letter assuring me of his unaltered attachment, and bidding me come off to him at Tunbridge Wells."

The note thus handed to him is dated "Royal Hotel, Norwich, 12 o'clock P.M.," and contains these sentences: —"I can assure you, my beloved friend, that nothing can alter, or has in the slightest degree altered, my affection. I have nothing to complain of as far as you are concerned; and I beg to assure you I have never, in thought or word, done you an injustice." Within a week the visit to Tunbridge Wells was accomplished,

and the friendship proved to have been unaffected by the shock.

When the tide of public excitement had subsided, it was found that Mr. Brock's position among his fellow-citizens was as firm as ever; it was observed, in fact, that his influence in movements affecting the common good was more appreciated than before. His congregation was not only as large, but more intelligent, while its spiritual condition often called forth his gratitude. It is not therefore surprising that a renewed endeavour, which was made at this time to transfer his services to Broadmead, Bristol, should fail. No appeal from without availed to loosen his ties to the people of St. Mary's; but the reason from within which was to lead to that result was very shortly to be made apparent. In the course of this winter the severe measures to which the oculists had had recourse led to great depression in his general health. Preparation for the pulpit became difficult, and pastoral visitation extremely burdensome. It was observed, too, that he showed a strange and unwonted preference for being left perfectly alone. He was induced, indeed, to accept an invitation to go to London for a few weeks to supply the pulpits of the Tabernacle, Moorfields, and Tottenham Court Road Chapel; and he was greatly cheered by proclaiming the Gospel to overflowing congregations in those time-honoured places of assembly. But the ultimate effect was to exhaust him still more, and his appearance on his return awakened much

anxiety, and led his physicians to require a period of cessation from labour. He complied with this advice, and went to visit faithful and hospitable friends at Rochdale, who, rightly discerning his condition, despatched him in company with their own minister for a month's residence at Ben Rhydding in Wharfedale. This was the most sensible sanitary advice and treatment which he had received for some time. The hydropathic system was pursued with more rigour at that period than it is generally at the present day; but balanced as it was in this instance by singularly salubrious air and cheerful society, it led to the speedy renovation of the prostrate powers.

Although, however, on his return, his friends acknowledged that his youth seemed to have been renewed, he bore with him the opinion of Dr. M'Leod that he could not, with his tendency to ophthalmic affections, expect continuous health in Norwich. The judgment of that acute observer, coinciding with the advice which had been given a year before by Mr. Ware, as the result of his special knowledge, brought the subject of possible removal into serious private consideration. In the course of a few months the secret doubt became known to a few confidential friends, and, among others, to Mr. Peto, who, without pressing the proposal, intimated that if the necessity for leaving Norwich became conclusively established, he would be glad to see him the minister of Bloomsbury Chapel, London, which was then approaching completion.

This side of the problem demanded more thought than the other, for it was easier to submit to what was proved to be inevitable than to determine what action it was right to take with regard to a proposal to enter a new and untried position. This is put in a characteristically sensible and independent letter to his friend:—

MR. BROCK TO MR. PETO.

"I am in trouble lest my ministry should turn out to be unsuitable for the congregation you desire to see at Bloomsbury. My own impression is that the ability which God has given me is not of the kind which is wanted there. Here I am known, faults and all; there I am unknown, except, indeed, as an occasional preacher; and I need not tell you the difference between hearing a man now and then, and always. The preaching which would be tolerably acceptable two or three times a year would probably satiate when it came to be two or three times a week. I shrink from the thought of being sent first to gather together, and then to consolidate, a new congregation in the metropolis. I am not unmindful of the all-sufficiency of the Holy Spirit. I have known too much of that all-sufficiency to mistrust it; but it is given only to men in their right places, and I do not know that Bloomsbury is my right place.

"Then I am apprehensive of much discomfort in consequence of the follies and the fashionableness prevailing so extensively among professing Christians. I

do believe that the Church, and our portion of it, has fallen into a fearful condition of lethargy, and of conformity to the 'pride of life.' Believing this, I am much in the habit of speaking and acting accordingly —oftentimes, as I know, to the displeasure of those I address. They are, however, now accustomed to it, and I am less affected by their disesteem. But a new congregation, and a congregation made up partly of London professors, would probably so resent it as to impede my usefulness and mar my peace. I am greatly disquieted at the prospect of a congregation composed principally of persons whose wealth, tastes, and tendencies would lead them complacently to associate with ungodly men.

"Then I cannot hide from myself that my course on many public questions is deemed by many persons unjustifiable in the extreme. Not being able to bring myself to the opinion that ministers of the Gospel should let all public matters alone, I am not likely to let them alone. With my convictions of Christian duty, I cannot refrain from saying what I think about the oppression of the poor, the carnality of our national religious establishments, the general character of our legislation, and much that is deplorable in the condition of the commonwealth at large. I have always striven, as I trust I always shall strive, to avow my convictions in a way that becometh the Gospel; but avow them I must. My religion compels me to be the citizen throughout. Of course, I endeavour scrupulously to abstain from all political partisanship; but

from politics, properly understood, I dare not abstain. I never have done so in Norwich; I never would do so in London. But hence I am sorely afraid difficulty would arise. I am not sure that if I should pursue the same course when minister of Bloomsbury Chapel as I have pursued while minister of St. Mary's, you yourself would not be annoyed and grieved. I am fearful it would be so. I am fearful you would regret having for your pastor a man known to be a person of so-called *ultra* sentiments, and of sentiments, moreover, known to be especially offensive to many whose good opinion you desire to conciliate and secure. And as with yourself, so with others who may be expected to make Bloomsbury their home; and thus that mutual confidence so essential to the effective working of the great experiment you have undertaken would be endangered if not destroyed. How, indeed, can we entertain the slightest hope of the success of your experiment in the absence of, I had almost said, unfaltering confidence between yourself especially and the minister at Bloomsbury? How many things must be talked over without reserve? How many things must be done before all the world in unity of action and of judgment? How many things will be sure to occur which will require the habitual exercise of reciprocal forbearance, generous sympathy, and unwavering trust?"

The apprehensions thus manfully expressed, were met in a manner not less honourable; and to those who

cannot bring themselves to believe it to be possible for an unendowed ministry to enjoy independence of speech and action, it may be instructive to be assured, at this point of the narrative, that no part of the liberty demanded in this letter was ever denied, and that nothing at any time marred the union now on the point of being formed.

It is not necessary to describe the trying process of severing the ties which bound Mr. Brock to his first pastorate. The reader is in possession of sufficient knowledge to imagine the state of feeling on both sides. "I cannot bear the thought," he says in a letter to a friend with whom he had discussed the question, "of leaving Norwich. The associations I have formed and the influence I have gained, with the opportunity for usefulness both in the city and in the county, render my removal a formidable thing. Such a sojourn as mine has been for upwards of fifteen years in this one place endears the situation to me beyond all expression. My witness is in heaven that the people are in my heart to live and die with them! Never were they kinder, never were they more ready to minister to my welfare in every way."

It was not without reason that his heart clung to those years. They had witnessed a great expansion of his nature in every direction. Amid much external occupation, he had maintained great industry and persistence in private study, keeping himself acquainted with contemporary works in biblical criticism and theo-

logy, and marking the new phases of religious thought presenting themselves in that stirring time. He gave the fruits of a wide course of reading on Church History in a series of articles contributed to the "Church Expositor," a journal edited by himself and his friend Mr. Reed, covering the whole line from the Pauline Churches through the troubled centuries down to the English Puritans. In the same journal he produced also a set of papers, published afterwards in a pamphlet, giving a perspicuous exposition of the doctrines of the Oxford Tracts, and showing a very clear prevision of the subsequent issues of those doctrines.

His association with other men, both in affairs of national interest, and in those which more closely concerned him in the Church of Christ, was far from being unfruitful. While maintaining his independence, he grew largely in charity, deference, and patience. He continued certainly to be sometimes startling and unguarded in his utterances, but his undaunted honesty and quick perception of error saved him from complications into which more discreet men fall. It must have been observed, too, that while he received more than most men the love of friends, both within and beyond the circle of his congregation, he was not left without the discipline of sorrow. What might have proved injurious was counterbalanced at one time by disquietudes in the city and in the church, which brought his conduct, for a while, under severe and painful animadversion, and at another by personal sick-

nesses which threatened to affect the whole course of his life and ministry—trials which brought him, as his journals testify, into great prostration of spirit, separating him from human support, and shutting him up to God. Cecil's remarks on this subject will be remembered: "A minister, while his preaching seems effective, and life and feeling show themselves around him, moves on with ease and pleasure. But there is much of the man here. If God change the scene; if discouragements meet him; if he seem to be laid by in any measure as an instrument; if the love of his hearers to his person and ministry decay, this is a severe trial. Yet most of us need this trial, that we may be reduced simply to God, and may feel that the whole affair is between Him and ourselves." Through this experience he passed, and not without his "profiting" becoming apparent. "He was," says one who knew him well at this period, "a man of God, a devout and saintly man, without any pretension to sanctity, thoroughly natural, often amusingly so, and almost childlike, yet always really imbued with the master-passion of love to Christ. You could not converse with him on any subject without discovering very soon that he was a Christian, and looked at all things in the light of the Divine will, though perhaps he would never distinctly state as much."

In reference to the "grief and sensation" produced by his removal, the writer adds: "His brother ministers felt an irreparable void, for he was a tower of strength

in council and action, and a warmly sympathising friend. His people were for a time inconsolable, and the citizens in general missed a foremost figure in all emergencies, ever ready with fearless speech, prompt decision, energetic conduct, and the advice of experience. His impulsive, generous nature, and his brave and manly character, formed so rare a combination, that all felt it to be one hardly likely to come to them again."

London.

" *To these, my poor companions, seem I strong,*
And at some times such am I, as a rock
That has upstood in middle ocean long,
And braved the winds' and waters' angriest shock,
Counting their fury but an idle mock:
Yet sometimes weaker than the weakest wave
That dies about its base, when storms forget to rave."

—ARCHBISHOP TRENCH, *Steadfast Prince.*

Chapter Eleventh.

"The best reward for having wrought well already is to have more to do; and he that has been faithful over a few things must find his account in being made ruler over many things; that is the true and heroical REST which only is worthy of gentlemen and sons of God."
—*Charles Kingsley.*

THE Nonconformists of the "Three Denominations" in London continued for a long time contented with the obscure sanctuaries in which their fathers worshipped. The sacredness of old memories may have had less to do with this than the enormous cost of prominent situations, and the reluctance of the owners of the soil to part with it for such purposes on any terms; but the present century had almost passed through its first quarter before any Dissenting congregation in the city ventured to obtrude its place of worship upon public observation. The Presbyterian churches occupied dismal buildings in back streets in the time of the greatest popularity of Edward Irving and Dr. Waugh. It was much the same with the Independents. The thousands who daily crossed old London Bridge had no indication of the adjoining scene of Mr. Binney's early ministry in the upper room of the King's Weigh-house in East-cheap; nor could the still greater numbers who thronged

the front of the Mansion-house suppose, from anything they saw, that on Sundays they would be within hearing of the psalmody of Mr. Clayton's congregation in the Poultry Chapel. The Baptists were, if possible, still deeper in the shade. The population had rolled up and down Bishopsgate Street for two centuries without having been reminded that a line of pastors from Kiffen to Howard Hinton had been preaching on the site of the old palace of the Cavendishes in the court within the court called Devonshire Square; and who, on travelling westwards through the chief thoroughfares, or even in the subordinate streets, behind the houses of which they were for the most part entrenched, could gather that in Keppel Street, Eagle Street, and Lincoln's Inn Fields, they were passing the pulpits of Martin, Ivimey, and the courtly Stennets? None of these chapels had been without congregations. They had all had periods of prosperity, and had exercised considerable influence on the religious life of their times; but they appear to have trusted, for their continuance, more to family traditions and imperative convictions of duty, than to the bold publication of their message in the face of the country.

It was possibly because Mr. Henry Drummond, of Albury, had not been nurtured in Nonconformist timidity, that when, in 1818, he erected at his own cost the chapel in John Street, Bedford Row, he bluntly brought the Greek portico—now no more—into a line with the houses of the broad street; but although the

remarkable ministry of James Harington Evans on that spot more than justified its selection, this chapel remained the only one connected with the Baptist denomination in a really public position in the city for another generation. Even then the spirit of enterprise had too much of the damp of the past upon it to be very readily kindled; for when Mr. Peto, in 1848, made large offers of pecuniary aid to any united effort to erect a place of worship suited to the times, they fell to the ground. It was not until he failed to obtain co-operation that he proceeded to act independently and to give effect to his own design, which was to obtain a site for an edifice that should actually meet the eyes of the people, and be accessible equally to rich and poor.

Certain topographical changes which were then contemplated in Bloomsbury favoured this purpose. The traveller who at that time proceeded eastward along Oxford Street was obliged, on reaching Tottenham Court Road, to turn to the right, and describe the irregular arc of a circle, which, touching St. Giles' Church and the end of Drury Lane, fell into the eastward course again when near Southampton Street. It was now determined to supply the chord of that arc by continuing Oxford Street in a straight line until it should reach Holborn. At right angles to that new street ran another, which, on being widened, received the name of Bloomsbury Street, and presented the very situation that was desired. Application was accordingly made for it to the Chief Commissioner of Woods and Forests.

Lord Morpeth, who then filled that office, though free from prejudices which had often made such requests abortive, proposed, in order to the protection of the adjoining property, that the building should be veiled by a range of houses, and approached by the traditional avenue of Nonconformist church architecture. The offer on that condition was declined; but the stipulation that, if a public position was conceded, the edifice should have an ecclesiastical character, was complied with. When the plan of the front elevation was submitted, with its twin spires, no objection on the ground of its deficiency in those features could be raised in official quarters; nor did any justly lie against them even on utilitarian grounds, since they were made to serve both for staircases and ventilation.

The chapel at last stood on ground long before consecrated by the martyrdom of Lord Cobham, the Wickliffite,[1] having Bedford Episcopal Chapel on the one side, and the French Protestant Church on the other, and affording room for about fifteen hundred auditors, together with as much accommodation in the form of schoolrooms and vestries as the restricted space permitted. The opening, which had been wisely delayed until the appointment of a minister, was celebrated under circumstances of great interest, on the 5th of December 1848. Representatives of churches in all parts of London expressed their appreciation of the zeal and judgment of the founder, who had made such

[1] Foxe's "Acts and Monuments," King Henry V., A.D. 1417.

admirable provision for a congregation without even

the appeal for pecuniary assistance associated with

opening services; although, as he represented, he had left a reasonable balance of the cost to exercise the liberality of the future congregation.*

Mr. Brock received the welcomes and devout wishes of his friends with his usual frankness, but not without anxiety in view of the responsibilities on which he was entering. Although only two families, and if the relationship between them is considered, only one family, had expressed an intention to join the congregation, yet from the first Sunday onwards the attendance continued so numerous that the greatest care was required for their arrangement and accommodation. The pastor's eye and hand were felt in every direction. It was impossible for any one to doubt that he was actuated by an earnest purpose, and had formed a plan of operations which would come into view as the enterprise proceeded. He certainly was far from sparing himself. His sermons cost as much labour as ever, and were delivered with an intensity and concentration which arrested and touched the auditories. That these impressions might be gathered up in their freshness, he invited every one who desired religious counsel to call upon him next day, and the house which had been taken for him in Gower Street, and in which he lived during the whole of his pastorate, being not far off, was generally crowded from an early hour in the morning.

Although many of these visitors came, as he writes

* This was in due time refunded to the donor, and by him applied to the construction of Regent's Park Chapel.

to a friend, "wanting all kinds of impossible assistance," he was never led to forbid the general levée; but finding the time too short, and to many inconvenient, he often set apart a week during which he saw inquirers every evening in his vestry; and as if determined to demolish the last obstruction to the personal intercourse he wanted, he sometimes appointed, in addition, the hours from six to eight in the morning. A gentleman, when he heard this announcement made on one occasion, reasoned within himself, "This man is evidently in earnest; it is time I were so too;" and pursued a course of thought which led to his religious decision and his union to the Church. The discoveries which he made, through these interviews, of the state of religious knowledge among the people urged him to the formation of Bible classes, which he maintained in different forms for both sexes, with occasional intervals, almost to the close of his ministry; and that the careful study of the Word of God might be extended to many who could not join those classes, he instituted a weekly lecture, which generally had an expository character, from eleven to twelve on Friday, and afterwards on Thursday mornings. This was one of his favourite services. The congregations, neither so large nor so mixed as those on Sundays, had an air of intelligence and devotional quietness which refreshed him; and few demands upon his time in other quarters were strong enough to induce him to be absent on these occasions.

The only other special service which vied in interest

with this was one of a different character, and occurring at longer intervals—the "Midsummer Morning Lecture," of which he gives the following account:—"From the first many young men were found in the congregation, and it was my pleasure to have intercourse with them of different kinds. Hence arose a practice of preaching to young men a good deal, not only in a special sermon now and then, but in the tone and cast of my ministry at large. It came upon me to watch earnestly for their souls. As I was musing one day, the thought occurred to me of some service at an unusual time. The matter was talked over among my friends; and, as the time approached, it was resolved that we would hold a midsummer Sunday-morning service from seven to eight o'clock. Accordingly, on Sunday morning, the 24th of June 1849, we held our service; a goodly number having assembled of the class that I desired to address. The next year the service was repeated, and it came to be thought that possibly it would be an annual thing."

So it proved to be; with only three interruptions, it recurred for twenty years at the same season with unfailing charm. The year, which in that month reaches its greatest beauty, brings even the dim city into sympathy with the new life which has stolen over the land. The trees of the squares are mantled with verdure, all the more interesting from being thrown out from a background of dreary walls, and known to have a short and precarious tenure of life. The change, too, from

the usual roar of the streets to a true Sabbath calm being much more marked in the early morning than it becomes in the later parts of even the "day of rest," everything conspired to make the event attractive to the young, who in many instances had come from the freedom of country life to the close business occupations of the city. They streamed from all quarters to the place of the gathering,—some drawn by the novelty belonging to it; others desiring to renew and confirm their religious purposes; and numbers who had received a blessing at the earlier services,—for the preacher once wrote to a friend, 'There has never been a service without conversions,'—having made it part of their yearly duty to come up from great distances to attend them all. The enthusiasm with which many speak of these morning assemblies may well be pardoned. The spectacle which the audience presented, filling all the area, galleries, vestries, aisles, and lobbies with so much joyful life, was in the highest degree inspiring. The outside, too, had often its supplementary service by some other preacher, who stood ready to diminish the disappointment of those who could not find an entrance. Both services concluding at the same moment, the congregations blended in the retiring stream.

It was, however, an easier task for a fresh and energetic ministry to draw congregations out of a vast city than to select from them the materials of a united and harmonious church. While this delicate operation was in progress, it was of much importance to have it

clearly known that the design of the work which had been commenced was not merely the edification of those who should come under the instructions of the pulpit, but the recovery of thousands living in practical heathenism in their immediate neighbourhood.

The spirit which pointed scornfully to the "barns" in which Nonconformity had been compelled to nurture itself in the days of its repression has been ready, on the change of times, to charge it with abandoning the poor to the care of the National Church, and courting those only who can render it pecuniary support. That this charge is, as a general rule, unjust, is proved by overwhelming evidence; it certainly was emphatically so in the present instance. When Mr. Brock came from Norwich to London, he was accompanied by a home missionary, of whose character and abilities he had had proof, and whose support had been provided by the same generosity which had assured his own. They came to work hand-in-hand as the leaders of the same people—the one as their teacher in the great congregation, and the other as their representative in the homes of the desolate poor.

The field of action was not far to seek, for while the chapel had been planted near to the affluent trading classes and to the mansions of the Bedford estate, it was contiguous to some of the worst parts of London. The parish of St. Giles, which it adjoined, had long been proverbial for poverty; and although the current of the new street had swept away

the larger part of the miserable hovels which went under the name of the "Rookery," a portion of the corruption remained stagnant behind the chapel. Almost immediately after the opening day, Mr. Brock and Mr. M'Cree went forth together to try to win the attention of this people. They had great confidence in the power of love, combined with frankness and courage; nor were they without experience in the art of overcoming the opposition of the ignorant, and turning the flank of an enemy by words of kindness. But on this occasion they were not merely unsuccessful, they were driven from the ground. The violence which their presence created could not be soothed, and they were compelled to admit that the withdrawment of those who had attempted the same work before them in that place had been justified. This spot had been chosen, in the first instance, because it lay nearest to them; but in the streets radiating from the centres called the "Five Dials" and the "Seven Dials," which lay within a few minutes' walk in another direction, there were thousands equally untouched by the beams of Christian light; and to them they next directed their attention. The pastor and the missionary explored those dismal passages and courts, penetrated into apartments above and below, within and behind each other, where the inhabitants seemed to have lost all the habits of civilised life. They were, however, free from the fierce fanaticism of the Irish, to whom the first appeal had been made, and soon became accessible to the kindly

interest of their visitors. In a short time the missionary found himself welcomed as a friend in the abodes of about four hundred families; a hall was procured, where the people collectively heard the Gospel for the first time, or after a dreary interval of years; it became possible also to hold positions in the open air, and to seize the attention of loiterers about the doors or at the open windows, who were in many instances emboldened to come under more regular instruction.

The work eventually received considerable expansion, as well as a character of greater organisation and permanence, when the old Swiss Church situated behind the houses of Moor Street, St. Giles, and entered by a long passage, was taken and constituted the Bloomsbury Mission Hall.* This soon became the home of libraries, classes, and societies, and the scene of constant ministrations, lectures, and entertainments. The work gave large scope to the benevolent exertions of the congregation at Bloomsbury. It was borne to the throne of grace in their public prayers, while its trials and encouragements, its failures and successes, the sadness of the people's

* It may interest some readers to know that the Rev. J. H. Evans began his London ministry in this little church, and, when it became overcrowded, removed for somewhat greater accommodation to another, situated behind an old mansion of the Hattons in Cross Street, Hatton Garden, where, about five years afterwards, the Rev. Edward Irving attained to his sudden and brilliant popularity. It was there that the Christian church was formed which now assembles in John Street, Bedford Row.—Memoir and Remains of James Harington Evans, M.A. London, 1852, pp. 33, 34.

lives, and the blessedness which the Gospel had brought to many of their families, were kept constantly present to those who lived under happier conditions. The pastor was fully alive to this incidental advantage. It would otherwise have been surprising how often, with his manifold duties in other directions, he was able to accompany the missionary to preside at a meeting of thieves; to chase away the lingering lines of dejection from the boys of the Ragged School Refuge; to go round the tables at an anniversary feast; to deliver a lecture on some popular subject to the delight of motley audiences, and to taste the joy of telling the story of salvation to those to whom it was still new.

Although there was abundant room for these missionary operations, the greatest care was taken not to weaken nor disparage the work of those who had been earlier in the field, and it was gratifying to find this sentiment returned from all sides. The rector of the parish, the Hon. and Rev. Montague Villiers, hailed the newcomer in the most Christian spirit, not only welcoming the labours of his congregation among the poor, but receiving him personally into his friendship. In the sermon which Mr. Brock preached and published on the occasion of the Bishop's lamented death these words occur: *—

"Well do I remember his kindness to myself at the commencement of the work of God in this place. When

* The Rector of Bloomsbury became Bishop of Carlisle and then of Durham. He died in 1861.

originating our Sunday School, we deemed it incumbent on us to avoid all interference with neighbouring Sunday Schools. It was our determination to receive no children who were obtaining religious instruction elsewhere. We communicated our determination to the several superintendents, and assured them that our object was not sectarian competition but generous co-operation. The rector heard of this from his superintendent: and on the same Sunday evening I received from him a letter expressive of his warmest sympathy with me as a fellow-labourer in the vineyard of the Lord. It was a welcome such as no other man could have given. Our relative positions taken considerately into account, it was a welcome, I confess, in which I gratefully rejoiced.

"From that time he evinced towards the evangelical operations of this congregation the utmost kindliness and respect, on the ground that there was room enough and to spare for more labourers amongst the multitudes around us who are ignorant of God. After his elevation to the Episcopal bench he retained for us his kindliness and respect, making good, as opportunity offered, his own words to me when he was leaving Bloomsbury for Carlisle, 'I hope the distance in locality will create no distance in our feelings of mutual good-will.'

"To the end those feelings of mutual good-will continued; and no doubt have I whatever that at his latter end we should have parted, as many times on Sunday mornings we have parted, he on his way to Bloomsbury

Church and I on my way to Bloomsbury Chapel, '*The Lord be with you*'—his brotherly commendation, '*And with thy spirit*'—my brotherly response.

"He died as he had lived, in union with Christ and in communion with all who belong to Christ; conscientiously and faithfully attached to his own section of the church, but unfeignedly and fraternally regardful of every other section of the church which the Lord hath purchased with His own blood."

Chapter Twelfth.

"We nerve ourselves for toil by looking onward
Into the splendour wherein all shall end—
Toil tries the spirit, but evokes the man."
—*Horatius Bonar.*

THE prosperity of the new enterprise had been immediate and striking; but no one who looks round the whole case will be surprised to learn that it produced in the minister little elation. The demands upon his attention to innumerable internal details, and especially to the settlement of the relations in which he was to stand to persons, previously unknown, who gathered around him from all quarters, joined to the unceasing necessity of laborious preparation for the pulpit, led, on the contrary, to some anxiety and depression.

The concise diary, consisting now more of words than of sentences, often describes the audiences by the term "overwhelming," but follows it with some such words of apprehension as these: "Can this *last?*" or, "Serious reflection about the *future*," or, "*Must* have more time *alone*." The effect of this on his health and spirits is thus told at the end of a week: "Very, very

ill; but went on working. Oh, this necessity, well or ill!" Within six months after the opening he can recall only one lower sounding than he had reached: "A day of the deepest depression I have ever known; *always excepting the Norwich election!*"

It was not, however, his habit to look for a long time inwards. His sympathies, always at full tide, reached his friends by a great variety of channels. To one he writes when on the eve of a journey:

"It grieves me to leave home without speaking to you. I rose early this morning that I might run over before starting to exchange a few words of mutual salutation and regard, but I give it up and live in hope.

"It is with reluctance I leave my proper work—work which not only becomes more arduous, but more interesting every week. I am to have some morning meetings on my return with inquirers, from six until eight o'clock; probably, too, I shall have two morning baptisms. To do anything beyond what Bloomsbury brings is becoming impossible. Letters alone occupy very large portions of my time; not only in the act of writing, but in the preliminary act of considering what I had better say. Such distress of mind comes under my notice as I hope is never surpassed. Often I know not how to meet it but by grouping together the beautiful utterances of our gracious Lord, who does 'know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.' Ever, my dear friend, may He speak such words to yourself. You have had them spoken to you many a time before

now; on occasions, especially, when you have felt your lack of consolation and assurance, there has come to your remembrance what Jesus has said—what, in fact, Jesus is saying still. Because He has been your help, therefore under His wings you may again rejoice: 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' With every expression of sympathy and attachment, and with kindliest thoughts of your precious bairns, I am, your ever affectionate pastor."

To another in affliction these consolatory and instructive words:

"We seem to have been brought into more intimate fellowship with you in consequence of your affliction, and to know more exactly how to bear you upon our hearts before the throne of grace. By no means of one sort only are the indirect benefits arising out of our afflictions. I think that I can say thankfully, that it has been good for *me* that you have been a sufferer: may you, my dear friend, find very largely and continuously that it has been good for yourself.

"It grows very much upon me as a conviction that times of apparent adversity are really the times of tranquil and profound enjoyment. When we might be thought deprived of almost all comfort, it comes to pass that comfort wonderfully abounds. In scenes from which a bystander would suppose there could come nothing but complaints there come songs, or at least utterances, of the most grateful praise. 'Weep not for me' is no unusual entreaty from some secluded

and distressed one to those who leave the chamber as though it were a place of unmitigated grief.

"Somehow we then get into a better position towards God. We form a sounder opinion of the nature of His gifts. They are felt to be gifts, gratuitous and undeserved. Health is not a prescriptive right, nor ease, nor activity, nor aught else that we have been accustomed to enjoy. These enjoyable things come successively and continuously from the Lord. Sickness brings back this fact to our recollection; we then not only admit it, but experience or realise it. And this imparts satisfaction, at the same time that it brings us into more immediate and childlike harmony with the designs and operations of our Heavenly Father.

"How often, my dear friend, does the upward gush of thankfulness get feebler and more fitful when all is uninterruptedly auspicious! How insensibly does the 'well of water' within us get choked or shut up by the incrustations of unbroken ease! We do get so soon and so unconsciously to overuse or to misuse the world where we ought only to use it! God loves us too well to let this go on. He loves you too well to let anything like it go on. It is His purpose to have you for Himself, 'a vessel fitted for the Master's use.' 'Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.' You are too precious to Him to be left unchastened. I pray you to believe this, to believe it with a really firm confidence, and then you will be the better able, on your return to us all again, to carry out your resolutions to be more

than ever a consecrated and self-denying one. Dear, dear friend of my sincere and warm affection, accept my assurance of readiness to help you in any way and in every way as your pastor and your fellow-heir of the blessed promises.—Yours devotedly in Jesus Christ."

It was not possible for one endowed with so many popular qualities to be allowed to confine his ministrations to one congregation. Churches in London and throughout the country claimed from him an occasional visit. If, indeed, he had had no other duties to perform, he could not have complied with the half of those applications, and it consumed no inconsiderable amount of time to send courteous refusals. His heart inclined to comply with them all. Nothing gave him greater pleasure, harmonising as it did with his earliest tastes, than to go and cheer village churches and pastors; but he sometimes questioned whether the state of excitement and curiosity which prevailed in the celebrations in which he was so often expected to bear a part was favourable to the production of such spiritual effects as compensated for loss of time and the interruption of home services. He sighed over the problem, and was contented to go on doing his best to meet its requirements without pushing it to an absolute solution.

Whatever it was in his power to do for the improvement of the religious life, especially of young men, in London, he regarded as legitimately demanded of him. The number of young men attracted by his ministry was always great; and fully sympathising in their desire

for a fair measure of amusement, and, in the case of those especially who were severed from their homes in the country, for the cheerfulness of social life, he very soon added to his Bible classes an association which embraced in its winter programme a bright succession of lectures, discussions, elocutionary and musical performances, and occasional evenings for simple conversation and fellowship. This institution was maintained with great spirit, and became an essential part of the congregational economy. It was a rare thing for him to be absent from the weekly meetings of the season, and while on the one side he was hailed with enthusiasm, he felt himself, on the other, well repaid by the personal knowledge which he acquired of a most interesting section of his flock.

Before he came to Bloomsbury he was not unknown as a speaker in Exeter Hall, which his voice and manner very well suited; and when, on the eve of his settlement, he went to deliver a lecture there to the "Young Men's Christian Association," the chairman gave so elaborate an introduction to the presumed stranger from the country, that the audience at first imagined it a train of delicate irony, but, on gradually discerning the sincerity of the speaker, their merriment gathered strength, until, at the close, they burst into a good-humoured welcome to their familiar acquaintance. He spared no pains in his preparation for these lectures; and although he sometimes took a plain and popular subject, such as the character of Daniel or of Paul, apply-

ing their examples to the life of modern times, he sometimes threw his energies, under an overruling sense of duty, into subjects of more difficult treatment. A lecture on "Mercantile Morality" opened questions by no means agreeable to some of the employers who gave their patronage to the Association, but which he treated with no less fairness than fidelity. When the Association laid before him a request to deliver a lecture on the "Seventh Commandment," he took the matter into serious consideration; and although he encountered anguish in its composition which he had not foreseen, and which often made him bitterly regret that he had assumed the task, he went on to its close. A large audience, specially convened, heard it at Exeter Hall; and it was considered by the most competent judges to combine in so high a degree the fearlessness, tenderness, and solemn persuasiveness demanded by the subject, that he was urged to deliver it a second time, which was done to a similar audience in St. James's Hall. He was rewarded by having been made acquainted with at least one case not only of recovery from a vicious life, but of reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ.

Exeter Hall, it will be remembered, became the scene of directly religious services during the time of the first International Exhibition. It is now hardly possible to recall the speculations and apprehensions which collected about that novel gathering when its approach was contemplated, even from the religious standing-point. It

was certain that a large number of foreigners of various tongues and creeds would be attracted to the metropolis, to whom it might be possible to offer opportunities of Divine worship on the day when, in accordance with the public sentiment of England, the doors of the Exhibition would be closed; and it was not less clear that the accession of English-speaking strangers from most parts of the world would exceed the capacity of existing places of worship to give them accommodation. The first trace of Mr. Brock's thought for the English services, in which afterwards he took the deepest interest, occurs in December 1850, and the formation of a committee followed in January 1851. A month or two later he invites Mr. Binney, Dr. Beaumont, and Dr. James Hamilton to dine with him at Gower Street, when these representatives of the four denominations uniting in the movement agree upon the methods of service. The second Sunday evening was assigned to him, and after a most encouraging series of assemblies, the last Sunday evening having also fallen to him, he marks it with this brief note:—"Never preached with such feelings; the place thronged; the attention great; the Lord gracious! I am thankful for the suggestion of these services." It was to no inconsiderable degree in consequence of the interest awakened by those meetings in the minds of Christians in all parts of the country that the use of secular buildings for the proclamation of the Gospel became much more frequent. We shall see hereafter how

large a share was taken by the metropolis in this form of evangelism.

As the church increased in numbers, new methods became necessary to bring its members into more intimate communication with the pastor and with each other. Many of these succeeded for a time, and, on losing their freshness, were followed by others, and these again by others, each accomplishing something, and all leaving the ideal unity unreached. Mr. Brock was at no time a great walker, and the London distances on foot soon defeated him; but by various means he succeeded in effecting a good many visits to the actual homes of his people. The journal bears frequent references to the wide sweep of his visitations, such as "about and about," as his usual phrase was, "from Dalston to Pimlico;" but except where age or sickness made it certain that he would find the object of his solicitude, he reckoned these journeys, on the whole, unsatisfying. The great means of social religious animation during the week was the meeting for prayer on Monday evenings. It was largely attended, and maintained for a long series of years with vital interest. Peculiar order and delicacy marked its management. On taking his seat, the pastor glanced over the meeting, and having decided on those whom he desired to take audible part, he intimated their names to the deacons at his side, who quietly proceeded to each one and mentioned the place he was requested to occupy. No names were

announced, and no suddenness in the demand or the offer of assistance disturbed the calm of devotion. The services of the previous day; the circumstances which had arisen in connection with the mission to the poor; the trials and anxieties of families; the temptations and duties of the young, and the general wants of the people, supplied usually the materials of intercession. But frequently entire meetings were specially set apart, on the occasion of any national crisis, or on the occurrence of any event of public interest to the Church of Christ, so that the heart of the congregation was kept sensible not only of its own wants, but of its relations and responsibilities to the world.

To these were added sectional gatherings of thirty or forty persons in private houses, where friendly intercourse was joined to biblical study, and in which he had great support from a few intelligent coadjutors. Finding, however, that many were omitted from even these reunions, he fell upon the device of inviting all who had entered the church in a particular year, or in the course of two specified years, to meet him at an advanced hour on one evening. The principle of this invitation was at once so definite and so general, that it obtained numerous responses, and many interesting interviews were the result. The comparatively trifling circumstance of having made a profession within the same period was found to establish a point of sympathy, and the introduction which followed saved some from that "great solitude" which the Roman said be-

longed to a "great city," and which certainly is often found in congregations, both great and small. Much was of course due on these occasions to Mr. Brock's hearty and frank manner, to the genuine interest which he took in the inner and outer condition of every one, and to what often struck even his intimate friends with surprise, his power of recalling whatever he had once known of the history of persons whom he had but seldom met. This facility of recollection, extending to their Christian names and the most familiar peculiarities of their families, often startled as well as delighted those who came to him under the impression that they were all but unknown. A timid girl, coming to reveal her religious struggles, on merely making her appearance would be met by a host of accurate questions about her father and mother, her brothers and sisters, which would put her perfectly at ease. A lady, whom he might have seen but for a day in Cornwall or Lancashire, on venturing to go into the vestry, in the vague hope that he might by some effort be made to recall her, would be greeted in a moment by questions about her husband, who, it may be, had met with an accident, her son, who had sailed for India, or a poor woman whom they had together visited in her cottage; and to all of whom he would send messages of love, as friends who lived in his heart.

This interest he expressed, to the delight of his people, on monthly Communion Sundays.* Placing

* There was a celebration of the Lord's Supper every Sunday.

himself, as they retired, near one of the doors—taking each door on alternate months—he would shake hands with all, and find time to put questions and get answers which conveyed much meaning to both sides. It was far from a merely formal greeting, but, springing from a genuine warm-heartedness, it gave gladness to many a depressed spirit, not more at the moment than in after-time. "I wish," says a struggling pastor's wife, writing to him from the wilds of Australia, "I wish I could get but one shake of your hand on a Communion Sunday; it would set me up for another year!"

"When I cannot overtake my people," said Dr. Chalmers, "I send them *cards*, which, though of small intrinsic, have great relative worth." At this busy time of his life, that was the only kind of correspondence which Mr. Brock could maintain. His quick sympathies and direct address made it appropriate to him. There was little in these notes but an instinctive gush of feeling, which often produced in the receiver as much surprise at the promptitude of his information as comfort in the assurance of his thoughts and intercessions. Although many of these brief missives have been preserved, and sent back from most parts of the land, and even from beyond the seas, it will not be surprising that only a few typical ones can be reproduced on these pages.

Sentences like these, for instance, though few in number, could not be without value to a widow in the first days of her grief:—

"He who wept with Mary and Martha,—who really did shed tears with them, and sat down and talked with them,—even He administers the promises to you under the peculiarities of your grief. *Let* Him talk to you and comfort you, and give you rest in your soul! Great is He in His power,—equally great in His brotherly kindness and fellow-feeling and willingness to help. I commend you and your fatherless children to the self-same care which made me and my widowed mother the object of its regard many years ago. I can tell personally that God is, in very deed, the 'Father of the fatherless.'"

This assurance must have been given with all the greater emphasis that he had a short time before been called to part with his mother, whom he loved with tender veneration. Although the journey to North Devon was more arduous than it is now, he was not satisfied, at any of the critical passages of his life, until he had seen his mother. When perplexed by contending calls on leaving College; when the state of his health at Norwich threatened his continuance in the ministry; and when he had under consideration the proposal to remove to London, he repaired to Barum, as he preferred to call Barnstaple, to spread his thoughts before her, and to receive her counsels. It was about six months after the opening of Bloomsbury Chapel when he heard of her serious illness. He hastened to her side, passing two nights on the road, and spending with her all the time at his command, one whole day,

as he notes, "to her comfort and my own." The visit, however, was soon followed by tidings of her death, and this is the record of July 12, 1849: "Went to the grave with the remains of one of the best mothers in the world. How much do I owe to her prayers on my behalf!" And that of a few days later: "At work for Sunday. Felt as if I had lost the benefit of my mother's prayers. But Jesus prays for me still." It is much to be regretted that none of his innumerable letters to his mother have been recovered.

In a different style to the note last quoted, but with the same spirit and purpose, are these lines to a Christian in worldly prosperity:—

"*November* 5, 1852.—God has given you, I suppose, almost 'all things richly to enjoy.' Few indeed, very few are there whose lot comprehends so many of the means of personal and domestic comfort as yours,—and with these there comes His daily blessing. May it come in far ampler measure than ever,—may it so come that you shall find prosperity not a hindrance to spiritual mindedness, but a help; not a snare, but an inducement to ever-increasing devotedness to God. I have greatly felt your need of much grace in respect to the responsibilities of your position. To train up your children in the way they should go; to act towards so many servants as becometh the Gospel of Christ; to be courteous to persons of undoubted worldliness without compromising your profession of separation from the world; to be what you are and yet be the humble, self-

denying follower of the Saviour, must, I am very well assured, be a task of much difficulty.

"Of this difficulty, however, none are so well assured as yourself; and there is grace for you, my dear friend, more than adequate to the necessity. Coming into the midst of your responsibilities day after day from communion with God, you will be strengthened to act aright, and cultivating the habit of constantly recognising God, you will go on through your several engagements with composure and satisfaction. The fascinations of society will not alienate you from the exercises of the closet; the elegancies of life will not indispose you to think of your latter end; the position in which Providence has put you will be made subservient to your purpose to 'obey God rather than man.'

"My beloved friend, you will really be helped from on high. He who seeth you in secret imploring His gracious interposition will reward you openly. Your friends, and those who may not be friends, will take knowledge of you that you are under Divine guidance continually. Your experience will accord with that of many others, with mine among the rest, that in every case of peculiar responsibility being devolved upon us, God will render to us, if we habitually trust Him, all-sufficient help. Without ceasing will I make mention of you in my prayers.

"I found all well on my return. What a mercy that! My wife well! William well! George well!

Hannah well! Ellen well! My servants well! How different it might have been!"

Letters frequently go to the servants when he is absent from home. A specimen of these announcing his return is dated

"*Menai Straits, 25th August* 1852.— . . . I assure you that we are all exceedingly glad that the time is come for our return home again. We have enjoyed ourselves very much indeed, but there is no place like home after all. Few homes, I think, are so happy as ours at Gower Street, and it is religion that makes it so. How much happier you have been yourself since you began to fear and love God. I do trust, my dear friend, you will keep on and on to fear and love Him. Don't ever give up the practice of private prayer and of reading your Bible. It is 'he that endureth to the end that shall be saved.' How many have I known that did not endure to the end! I hope you will. If either your mistress or I can do anything to help you on your way, we will do it most gladly. We will tell you anything that you want to know, and be always ready to show you that we are your real Christian friends. Never be afraid to ask us any questions or to make to us any requests. Our desire is to make you happy, as far as ever we can. You too desire to make us happy: well, that is the only way for a family to get on.

"Remember us to Maria. I hope she will give her heart to Jesus before long,—why should she put it off

at all? Let us be one in Christ. You will pray for us and we will pray for you, that we may meet and go on more comfortably than ever. Remember me very kindly to Esther, Fanny, Emma, Eliza, and all the friends you are accustomed to see. All here join in very kind regards to you, with yours sincerely,

W. B."

Chapter Thirteenth.

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of; wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats,
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend!
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."—*Tennyson.*

"FEW homes are so happy as ours at Gower Street; and it is religion that makes it so."

It was undoubtedly religion that made it so; for besides the harmonious natural action of diverse qualities in the heads of the family—in the one a frank and manly tenderness, and in the other "gentle command, and motherhood, and home, and pure affection"—there was the habitual recognition of the authority and presence of God. Everything was done with reference to His will and in dependence on His blessing; prayer being interwoven with all family incidents, changes, and prospects. A young relative,* who, on leaving school, spent about a year and a half under Mr. Brock's roof, says: "Though I do not remember any

* The Rev. W. B. Bliss, now minister of Belgrave Chapel, Leicester.

particular effect of his sermons, I cannot forget the interest of his family prayers. They were always short, often not longer than from three to five minutes, but they were so real, vital, and special to the necessities of the hour, that they seemed to ask everything and no more." There is a singular coincidence between this testimony and that of Mr. Reed: "His prayers were almost more remarkable than his preaching, and especially his prayers in the family and on social occasions. There was such simplicity, adaptation to circumstances, sympathy with individuals and special conditions—such a realising appeal to the Lord, who seemed taken into his confidence, together with such touches of pathos as often left the party dissolved in tears."

It can hardly be surprising, in the view of this, that the parents should see their two sons and two daughters successively avowing their love to Christ, and entering into union with His Church; nor will any one who has tasted the unutterable joy with which children are received from the hand of God a second time, in a nobler nature and to an eternal fellowship, be unable to account for the gladness of these words of the father to his first-born:—

"*December* 13, 1853.—Your letter on Sunday morning was most, most cheering, both to your dear mother and myself. We wept for joy, and we have wept again since. My dear boy, the thought does fill my soul with joy. Few persons know more than I know of the dangers which will beset your path. As I said last

Sunday week, many who were my hope have miserably failed in the day of their temptation. I will look for better things from you. Why may I not? For one who has failed, I have known twenty who have holden on their way, and who are holding on still. God is able to make you stand. He has been my Helper; He will be yours. Be assured that my brightest hope of you, my first-born, is *so far* realised. Let your profession be well maintained, and the realisation will be complete."

To the younger brother, while yet at school, the following lines were addressed at a later period:—

"*December* 13.— . . . Well, please God, we are all to meet at Christmas. Greatly does this gratify your mother and me; the more so as we really do hope to meet all together as a Christian family. Impossible it is, my dear boy, for me to tell you what my joy is in the hope that you are seeking and serving God. To have my two sons out-and-out servants of the Son of God is a blessing of whose full value an angel could not speak adequately. And I do regard it as certain—may I do so?—that you are a seeker with all your heart of your own salvation by Jesus Christ. Not a step would I urge you beyond your convictions; but I seem to think that you are on your way to heaven. Thank God! one here, one there."

Many fatherly counsels to the elder occur soon after the above date in notes written chiefly in the intervals of journeys.

"*Frome.*—I was sorry we had not an opportunity for prayers before I left, especially as we are not to meet for so long a time. I will set apart half an hour on Wednesday morning, from seven o'clock. Will you do the same? Then I will commend you to the Divine care; and the assurance that you will be kneeling at the same time before God will be very helpful to me. I need not ask you to make especial prayer for me. I got through yesterday tolerably well. Mr. Sheppard is very kind and very intelligent."

"*Rochdale.*—I could be annoyed by this had I not something better to do. By the by, don't you find that active employment is a real preservative against annoyances? I think that in proportion to our occupation in suitable and important undertakings, so is our superiority, or our actual insensibility, to the petty vexations and mortifications incident to our daily life. Think over this, and give me your opinion of its soundness."

A little later, from—

"*Oban.*—It was once said to me very kindly that I made my son too much my equal. I demurred, as I would always demur, to the statement. From a very early period of your life I determined to make you my companion in every possible way. I have gladly done so, quite aware that I must be upon my guard against the contingent disadvantage. There was the danger of your becoming too early independent of the restraints which rightfully apply to your age and position. I

thank God that you are alive to the danger, and that in His strength you are resolved to resist it. Delighted shall I be to watch the operation of your devout resolution. Your earnest effort must needs be towards the estimable, the amiable, or, as Paul puts it, the ὅσα προσφιλῆ. To be habitually mindful of that which is due to others—to their age, to their relative position towards yourself, to their weakness even, and their prepossessions—will be a great help to you."

Mr. Brock, though really desirous of seeing his eldest son serving with him in the Christian ministry, considered it his duty to take no step, even by suggestion, towards such a point. When his school-life at Totteridge, therefore, was finished by matriculation at the London University, he was sent to a mercantile house in the City, with no apparent destination to other pursuits, though with the persuasion that, should the desired change be demanded, these engagements would be found no unfavourable preparation for it. So little had the father influenced the son's subsequent decision, it was feared that its announcement might disappoint him; but this is the response:—

"*Somerleyton, Oct.* 26, 1854.—I have read your note with deep, deep satisfaction. I will breathe the matter to no living soul, your dear mother excepted, who is now upstairs reading what you say. I am not surprised in the least. Many a time has it occurred to me that you would turn your thoughts to the ministry. Again and again have your mother and I talked of it as a

possible thing. Friends, too, have frequently said they looked for it in due time.

"You *may* have heard me say that I hoped neither of my sons would be a minister. I am quite aware that I have said so; but it has been when I have been overwhelmed with a sense of my inadequacy to fulfil my duties, and when, as you know, my heart has been grievously depressed. The anxieties of a minister's life you are acquainted with from observation, and from sympathy with your father. They have arisen in my case certainly from the sense of incompetency. Had I felt that I was equal to the demands upon me, I think that I could have borne the ordinary trials of the pastoral and ministerial life with a goodly measure of comfort.

"I should never have deprecated your entrance upon one of the most honourable of all human occupations. Believe me, my dear boy, I do NOT deprecate it. No; your intimation has filled me with delight which I cannot express. God forbid that I should discourage a desire so spontaneous! Whether you have the requisite qualifications will now become the question. That I will help you to ascertain. I believe you have many of them; that you have them all in degree I quite hope. There will be nothing more grateful to me than to chat with you, plan for you, and pray with you in reference to the whole matter. Your mother sends kindest and most sympathising love with your affectionate father."

The inquiry into these "requisite qualifications" was

made with great deliberation. Three years elapsed, during which the church had full opportunity of observing the gifts and manner of life of the young aspirant to the ministry, and then both affectionately and solemnly expressed its belief that he had been called of the Lord to that work. It was decided that the preparatory studies should be prosecuted at the University and the Free Church College of Edinburgh—institutions which, in the same catholic spirit, throw open their classes to all seekers of knowledge without distinction of creed or country. Thither the student having repaired to join in the same pursuits, his thenceforth intimate friend Mr. Frederick Hall Robarts, now minister of Richmond Chapel, Liverpool, the following fatherly note comes after him:—

"*Study, Friday, October* 30, 1857.—Thank God for your prosperous journey! Thank Fred for coming to meet you: my kind love to him. I feel your loss profoundly. Everything is affected by your absence. The house is not the house of the last seven years; nor will the chapel and schoolroom be the same.

"Do I repine? Would I have you here? No. Take that to your heart with all confidence. Truly do I consent to your movement; thankfully do I regard the step you have taken. Never had I a pleasanter persuasion that the right thing has been done throughout. All this notwithstanding, you are away! Well, you will often write to me, and knowing now, a little, how words in season do come in to cheer, you will be ready

with your words. Thankful beyond utterance am I that we kept together so long. Not very many homesteads have been so much together as ours has been. How very, very few half so happy!"

The correspondence thus commenced was kept up steadily, at least every week. The father's letter, generally begun on Saturday, and ended after the work was over on Sunday night, was despatched on Monday; and although often hurried, and always informal and confidential, these notes will be not the less serviceable in throwing light on the pastoral life in Bloomsbury during the period which they embrace.

It was a period, it will be observed, of great activity. Mr. Brock, who began to be about fifty years of age, enjoyed a more equal state of health than he had done at twenty-five, and, during the ten years which followed, his work in London may be said to have reached its highest point of efficiency. The congregation continued as large as it could well be, and the church had grown to a magnitude which bore a fair proportion to it. The number of apparent conversions was not so great as it had been in earlier years, and some sadness finds record in the diary on that account; but the planting season had in some measure given place to the time of fruit, and there certainly was no want of evidence of the grace of the Holy Spirit on the ministry. The institutions which had been organised for the instruction of the young and the old, for the care of the sick and the poor, for the recovery of the fallen, and

for the preservation of forlorn children from the abysses of depravity, opened up paths of useful exertion to all kinds of talents, and few escaped the contagion of the prevalent zeal.

There arose about this time a general desire on the part of Christians throughout the country to bring the Gospel closer to the masses of the people. Nonconformists had freely used halls and theatres for that purpose in most of the chief towns, and a committee was now formed in London to enable clergymen of the Church of England to preach in Exeter Hall. On the eve of the intended services, however, the resident incumbent exercised his right to prevent clerical intrusion into his parish. Some time afterwards he withdrew this objection, but in the meantime it was supreme.

"Our Church brethren," says the weekly letter of November 9, 1857, "are in sad trouble through the incumbent of the parish in which Exeter Hall stands. He prohibits their coming into his parish to preach. The law is said to be perfectly on his side; at all events, the service announced for last night, under the immediate sanction of the Bishop of London, was put off at the eleventh hour. I shall look with deep interest on the proceedings of the brethren so baffled. Will they, after all they have said of late about the absolute need of going out of routine to get at the masses, and after all they have seen of the advantage of so going out—will they succumb to the canonical prohibition; or, true to the evangelical instinct and call, will they preach, the

prohibition notwithstanding? It brings them into a position of much responsibility,—the working classes looking on all the time."

"*Thursday, 19th November* 1857.—Lord Shaftesbury seemed bent to the last on fighting the incumbent, but yesterday he wrote to me that he gave way, and bade us 'God speed.' So D.V. we start next Sunday. The committee have handed to us their hymns, their small handbills, and their litanies for our free use—many thousands of them. The thing altogether is exciting much attention. You will aid me with your prayers, that I may preach so that the people may believe."

"*Sunday evening, 22d November* 1857.—The week's arrangements for Exeter Hall went on, after Wednesday, altogether independent of me. Having, on Friday evening, to meet Dr. Livingstone at Mr. Mudie's, I came in for a goodly measure of remarks about the services from the hundred or more persons who were there. Dr. A. thought the whole thing 'humbug;' Dr. B. thought it 'ungenerous towards the Church people.' Well, notwithstanding all discouragements and responsibilities, on I went with the sermon on which I had got to work for the occasion (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4), glad to assure myself that many were offering prayer on my behalf.

"To-night, all honour to a prayer-hearing God, everything has been auspicious. The hall was crammed up to the last standing-place—fustian jackets and blouses by hundreds. I read the Litany. Everybody re-

sponded. Not one thing went wrong. Tell Fred, and tell yourself, never to mistrust God. Only be sure that He call you to occupy a place, then go with the assurance of His help. My morning text, referring to the state of trade, was 'Take no thought.' God bless you evermore. I am tired. My wish was to telegraph to-night."

Evangelistic services of this description continued to occupy attention during the next two years, and then, as we shall find, they assumed a more extended and systematic form.

Those years, it will not be forgotten, embraced a period of great national anxiety through the occurrence, in close succession, of the invasion of the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny. Mr. Brock, who was not merely a reader, but a student of the public journals, observed thoughtfully the course of events, and by occasional sermons, and in his public prayers, sought to raise himself and his people above the passions of the hour, and to commit the interests of all nations to Him "who judgeth righteous judgment."

He took a keen interest, at a critical stage of the Crimean War, in the enterprise undertaken at the request of the Government by Mr. Peto, then member for Norwich, who had offered the services of an accomplished engineering staff to construct a railway which should connect the army with its supplies. The expedition, which was organised with striking promptitude and completeness at the beginning of

a winter darkened by terrible forebodings, carried in its steam-fleet not only whatever was requisite for the contemplated work, but all that could be thought of for the well-being of the men—clothing which the unhappy soldiers envied, surgeons, nurses, movable churches, libraries, and religious teachers. These last were selected by Mr. Brock from among those whom he had tested in similar work in Norfolk, and they went forth sustained by the assurance of his prayers and brotherly affection. The journals and letters which they regularly transmitted confirmed the confidence which he had reposed in them, and added a special quality to the satisfaction with which, at the close, he saw the patriotism and energy of his friend, who, although declining all gain from the contract, had resigned his seat in Parliament in order to perform it, fully appreciated by both the country and the Queen.

His feelings were destined to be not less excited at the close of the military struggle in the East Indies. Never, indeed, had the steps of a commander been traced with more general attention and emotion than those of Sir Henry Havelock when on his march to the relief of Lucknow. The heroic resolution of the leader, the devotion of the small band of followers, the perils of the march, and the critical position of the English in the faithless city, strained popular feeling to the point of agony; so that when the news of victory, overcast at the moment by the death of Lawrence, were followed by the announcement that Havelock too had departed

from the scene, a thrill of grief passed through the whole nation. When the first shock was over, eager inquiries arose respecting the previous history of the man whose name up to that period had scarcely travelled beyond professional circles and the friendships of private life. The partial answers which found their way into the newspapers served only to heighten the gathering interest; and religious persons especially, who learned, in the words of Lord Hardinge, that "Havelock had been every inch a soldier and every inch a Christian," demanded to be put in possession of all the information that could be found. Mr. Brock, who had become acquainted with the General when he attended his ministry at Bloomsbury, during a brief visit to England, and had now access to authentic accounts through Lady Havelock and her brother, Mr. Marshman, was led to the idea thus expressed in a letter to his son:—

"*January* 9, 1858.—It has occurred to me that it will be seemly if I preach a sermon on General Havelock's decease. I have written to consult Mr. Marshman."

The issue is thus told:—

"*Sunday evening, January* 17, 1858.—Again has your father to be greatly thankful. The congregation this morning was overwhelming. The doors were shut and bolted immediately after eleven, and then the staircases were full from bottom to top. The devotional services were, I hope, helpful. You know the text. Through Mr. Marshman's kindness I had facts enough,

and facts of precisely the right kind for my three points. I preached nearly an hour to my comfort, and apparently to general satisfaction. The facts were enough to enwrap any congregation; they really are glorious facts. The deacons sent up a message that I would announce a re-delivery to-morrow night. I complied."

The delivery on the following evening to an equal crowd brought upon him entreaties for the publication of the facts in one form or another.

"*Tuesday, 19th January*," the diary notes, "requested to prepare a sketch of Havelock. Mused—troubled—agreed. God speed the book!"

To this work he gave all he could spare of the next three weeks, the busiest of the year, at the same time meeting the popular impatience by again delivering the sermon, largely altered, to an assembly in Exeter Hall, when he was kindly supported by Lord Shaftesbury and Lord Panmure.

The book, notwithstanding, made its appearance on the 6th of March, and immediately entered upon an immense circulation. When the circumstances under which it was produced are taken into account, and particularly when it is remembered that the class which understood the Christian qualities and the class which appreciated only the military eminence of the man—each feverishly sensitive to the representation made of its favourite side of the character—alike insisted on being satisfied, it will not be surprising that criticism should, in some instances, have

assumed a severe tone. The temperament of the author made this unusual discipline somewhat trying. "I cannot tell you," he writes to his son, "how often I have wished I had never touched the book. Had you been with me here, I do not believe I ever should have done so. Still, as the thing is, I trust God will mercifully bring good out of evil."

"'Correct me,'" he writes finely to the same correspondent on April 4, "'is my prayer daily,—these severities of the critics may be the answer. I believe that they have occasioned much advantage already—spiritual advantage, I mean—and to get any measure of that is always a blessing. To have one's prayers invigorated, intensified, inspired, is for gratitude and praise. On Saturday I felt somewhat *driven* to my heavenly Refuge. I was as a man shut up to God. There seemed nothing left to me but quiet, implicit, unquestioning confidence in His sympathy with me. I was restored most graciously. I felt as if I had come into 'the secret place of the tabernacle of the Most High.' My extremity was God's opportunity; I was glad in the Lord indeed!"

He was, however, from the first favoured with one testimony to the manner in which he had executed his delicate task, which must have been peculiarly consolatory to a nature so dependent upon sympathy. "Lady Havelock writes to me," he says to his son, "'You would be really delighted if you knew what intense delight your book has caused us. I feel as if that memoir had been sent to me in a measure to heal up my broken

heart, and it will ever be my treasury—the next book in value to my Bible.'" And though he had never claimed for the volume more than the character of a preliminary "sketch," ending the preface modestly with the words, "The biographer of Havelock will be Mr. Marshman;" yet Mr. Marshman, who had supplied all the documents which could be found at the moment, after reading the book replied in these generous terms: "I could never have written anything half so attractive. You know the feelings and the sympathies of those for whose benefit and instruction you write, and you can touch the right chord. I should have been thinking of Sallust, while you are more appropriately fixing your eye on Doddridge and his beautiful sketch of the hero of Prestonpans."

No pains were spared in improving the editions which rapidly succeeded the first. "Incredible difficulties" were of course encountered in getting at "the facts exactly;" but eventually "every page" was scrutinised by "an officer who was with Havelock throughout the siege," and maps and charts made everything of that kind clear. The little book, in short, after crossing the first line of breakers, held a very honourable course, and has been accepted, both in the West and in the East, as the accurate record of a striking passage of history, and an edifying delineation of a noble character.*

* The publishers report that the sale has extended to *forty-five thousand* copies, besides those of the American and Tauchnitz editions. It was largely circulated among the American troops during the Civil War, and continues to be a favourite book with the young soldiers of our own army.

Chapter Fourteenth.

"Amid the shock and tramp of men
In cities huge, now let me throw
Myself full-weaponed on the foe,
Nor dream, nor rest, nor pause again."
—*William Best.*

THIS episode led to no diminution of the usual work at Bloomsbury, but concurred with other causes in imparting to it a fresh impulse. The remarkable religious awakening which took place in Ireland, and in some parts of Scotland, riveted general attention; and although leading to much speculation and some diversity of judgment, did certainly produce fresh energy and enterprise in Christian work. The weekly letters to the young student at Edinburgh, as they fell artlessly from the pen, touch on a variety of topics, but indicate pretty clearly the gradual expansion of this spirit of the time.

"*December* 4.—I was delighted with the account of your visit to those needy ones. May our gracious Saviour make this labour of love a blessing to yourself and the objects of your solicitude. Worthy of all acceptation will the old Gospel prove itself. Perpetually will you be struck with your capacity by means of its wondrous

messages to meet the strangest wants of our humanity. I am delighted at your having such famous practical supplementation of your College work.

"My week has been a busy one. Monday went on as usual until evening, when after prayer-meeting we began our Bible class, with the largest number we have ever had. Tuesday I preached at Brompton, came up to the opening of our new Refuge for Boys, and then went back. Wednesday, spent the evening with a Bible-reading party, and on Thursday after preaching, was again about and about among the people until the evening, when the Maternal Society required my polite attentions and chaplaincy. We had a comforting Church meeting last night: receiving ten and proposing nine."

"*December.*—Is it quite so certain that 'where there is a will there is a way?' What does Paul mean,—'to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not'? I think I am convinced frequently of the wrongness or of the rightness of a thing when I do not act, or refrain from acting,—though in a sort of way I am willing too. I incline to the idea that we need Divine help over and above every volition we may form. I seem to need something more than I have in myself. Think over this and give me the result. Is our own power sufficient after all?

"Keep near to God, my dear, dear boy. Our strength in the pulpit is born in the closet. Do not let private devotion slip through your fingers. Pray for me; I will pray for you."

"*December.*—How well I understand your difficulties about election. I knew them at your age—I have known them ever since—I know them now. But there they are; and if you give up all belief in election there will be other difficulties of equal intricacy and force. Semblances are not always realities. To our ignorances there are perhaps actual contradictions: let us get rid of the ignorance, and the contradiction disappears. To leave a man, you think, is to reject him. Then 'men are rejected,' you infer; 'not being chosen of God they are surely doomed.' But so far from dooming men, God beseeches them to return to Him and live. As it thus appears that none are doomed, 'what follows,' you ask, but that 'none are elected'? Logically the case appears to you complete. But then, in come Scriptures in abundance to disturb the conclusions of your logic. There are men who have been chosen to salvation (2 Thess. ii. 13): and all men are invited to salvation (John vi. 37). What remains but that we put up with the difficulty reverentially; and expound God's Word according to its meaning text by text."

"*April* 12.—Texts to-day, 'He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches;' 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' It was a gracious day; though my feeling was one of intense regret at the inefficiency of the preaching. Really I wondered, especially at night, that the people would sit to listen. The desire came on me to have a prayer-meeting; so from 8.35 to 8.50 we had one, nine-tenths of a large

congregation staying. In the morning, when speaking of Christ's warning to the churches, I said, 'One thing that would indicate a sense of your duty as a church would be your spontaneous anxiety to bring our neighbourhood under more evangelical instruction with a view to the conversion of the ungodly.' Not an idea had I of the fact—but some half-dozen brethren had been meeting at Mr. Harvey's during the week for that express purpose. I deem this a token for good."

"*May* 1.—I heard your Guthrie on Friday at Queen Street. 'It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell,' 'fulness for pardon, fulness for santification.' Into the whole matter the man just flung himself *con amore*. Metaphor on metaphor, or something like metaphor, to the very end. All nature seemed ransacked, and every living thing laid under contribution to make a man feel, 'there now, perish if you dare.' It was to me most refreshing, softening, elevating, comforting. I came away a better man. Yet the critics would have cried out ferociously, and as for the logicians, they would have shouted in wrath. I say, 'Bless Guthrie.'"

"*May* 30.—Congregations good, but made up greatly of strangers. Folk are actually flitting already. More room for others, you say; be it so. This afternoon I took a service in Cumberland Market, Hampstead Road. Text, Ps. xx. 5. Congregation as orderly and quiet as a Quakers' meeting. Number about 1200. Thus three

services have been got through. Blessings on each of them!"

Among the new methods was a popular service for working people in the afternoon of Sunday.

"*January* 22.—The folk-sermon in the afternoon brought from ten to thirteen hundred people. Of all promising services that we have ever had, I do think this afternoon's was the chief. It was perfectly beautiful. Not twenty of the congregation, so far as I know, had I ever seen before. Smock-frocks and fustian jackets were there by dozens. Thank God for this result. You would have rejoiced. Dr. Price, who was there, said it surpassed everything he had ever seen. It may turn out to be a precedent for real action upon the masses. I made neither mention of nor allusion to it this morning. This evening our congregation was immense. I seemed to feel that the Master was there."

St. James's Hall gets hired for similar services, in which he takes his turn, while for those in Bloomsbury he obtains occasional help from others:—

"*February* 26.—In the middle of last night I awoke with a sore throat. Arose tremulous and dejected. Wished myself a layman; thought of prayer for me, of yours among the rest, and took heart. Morning text, 1 P. iv. 10. In the afternoon went, with fear and trembling, to St. James's Hall: 'Neither do I condemn thee.' A magnificent spectacle! Soldiers, bearded artisans, artist sort of people, clergymen here and there; five men to one woman: 3000 immortal souls! Throat

mended; a strange and unexpected relief! Home at 5.30. Changed, abluted, and went off to Bloomsbury. Throat cured by the services of this really heavy day."

The cathedrals, with their grand spaces, at last bade the populace welcome.

"St. Paul's has been overflowing to-night to the top of Ludgate Hill; Westminster Abbey is to be opened in a week or two, and Exeter Hall before long. Not an element of doubt is there as to their being all filled —our chapels into the bargain. It is really encouraging to see the readiness to hear about the Gospel everywhere. You and Fred have fine prospects. Thank God for that. Be as diligent and devout as possible in these precious years of preliminary preparation. Get to know how men think. Be masters of the means of acting on men. Have the material wherewith to work on them emotionally, intellectually, morally. You may well tremble, you may well rejoice. Expect great things, attempt great things. Logic and exegesis for ever! a devout heart over and above all!"

In a few weeks later:—

"We looked for a smaller congregation, seeing that St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, Exeter Hall, and St. James's Hall were to be open for public service. However, though these places were all crammed, Bloomsbury was as crammed as ever. The phenomenon is really remarkable, the prospect arising from it surely very encouraging. If God's Word does not return to Him void, and if by the foolishness of preaching He

accomplishes His purposes of mercy to mankind, what may we not hope for from this amount of metropolitan preaching and hearing? Our want is now especially the 'spirit of grace and supplication.' Were He, 'the Spirit of Truth,' to put forth His might, the results would presently be immense. Be it yours, and Fred's, and mine to invoke His blessed advent!

"The folk-sermon was preached this afternoon by Newman Hall: the very thing! Plain, graphic, loving, urgent, evangelical throughout: 'Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by?' Illustrations manifold, appeals pungent, tone excellent, impression fine through and through. The evening congregation large and attentive. I got too vociferous and pugnacious, but seemed to take hold all round. 'Fancy a trumpeter in the crisis of a battle disporting himself with a voluntary on his bugle. Fool! But how scientific and artistic it *is*! What has he to do with the artistic and scientific just then? His only business is to sound out the orders of the captain to meet the emergency.' So with you and Fred and me. Our business is to speak out orders, that the people, hearkening, may get up and fight. A hard fight too! Let our sound be audible, distinct, powerful; the summons of men to their fellows to betake themselves to arms, lest they be led captive by the devil at his will."

These services were accompanied by manifestly deepened religious convictions.

"Wednesday," he writes, "was given to inquirers at

the vestry from ten to one, from three to five, and from six to nine. Not one five minutes was I alone throughout the day. Between forty and fifty persons came, many of them with statements of God's dealings with them which did my heart good. Of course I must see them again and again before I can decide, but the large proportion of them, I have no doubt, are converted to God, and the conversion of not a few took place at Bloomsbury. The Mission Hall too was mentioned by several with much gratitude to God. We had a most refreshing Church meeting last night. The tone of the meeting was beautiful, the numbers very large, and subsequent chat one with another very grateful.

"Our communicants this afternoon very nearly filled the chapel downstairs. I merely read the scene of Gethsemane out of Matthew at the Lord's Supper. It was really edifying. To realise all that agony, to apprehend it as an actual thing done and suffered for ourselves—to come with Jesus apart into that garden and see Him wrestling, striving, shrinking, all but yielding—that sets our wrongness right, and sends us away to glorify as well as to glory in His name."

"I do earnestly hope," he says in a little while after, "that some stir is observable amongst us. The devil surely is not going to be paramount! What should hinder our witnessing crowds inquiring the way to heaven? 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' Now if all London should send

callers, who shall declare that any one of them shall be sent away? There is balm enough and there is a Physician omnipresent and all-sufficient."

The spirit of faith thus expressed was widely diffused, and led to various new forms of evangelisation. It had become plain enough that the congregations attracted to the special services in the cathedrals and public halls consisted of persons by no means unaccustomed to public worship, and that if the unconquered hosts were to be won over, the banner of peace must be borne still nearer to them. It was therefore determined, in the face of discouragements from unexpected quarters, to attempt to subsidise the theatres. An application for the use of the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane was favourably entertained by the lessee; but when the company of actors came to learn what was intended, they joined in a remonstrance, and finally declared that if the step were taken they would reckon their engagements dissolved. In this position the manager requested to be released from his promise, and the negotiation ended. The failure turned out to be rather an advantage, for it led to the occupation, which was readily conceded, of the "Britannia," a similar building among the more necessitous population surrounding Hoxton.

The first service was held on the 18th December 1859, when Mr. Brock volunteered to preach, and Mr. Binney and Mr. Morley volunteered to stand by him. The idea of such a thing seems to have surprised the people of the neighbourhood as much as it had disgusted the

actors of Drury Lane. A missionary whose district lay in Shoreditch says of the notices which he distributed in the previous week, "These bills created quite a sensation. Scarcely any one would believe them. 'Tain't likely,' said one, 'that a parson would go on the stage to preach.' 'Well,' responded a street ballad-singer, 'I shall be at the "Brit.," and chance it'"—a resolution which seems to have been widely formed, for long before the doors were opened thousands were waiting for admission. The "green room," however, was soon in a state of alarm. The deep springs had at last been reached, and the place was flooded with a population utterly strange to religious usages. The tumult was appalling, and some hearts were beginning to fail. Mr. Binney looked upon the roaring waters from behind the curtain, and, returning to the room, drew Mr. Brock aside, and whispered, "There is no hope but in prayer." On the spot they knelt and asked for courage and blessing. Mr. Brock's only record of what followed,—besides the brief entry on his return home:—"*December 18th.* —The apprehended evening. God most merciful. Wonderful!"—is found in a note written on the 27th to a young friend whom he is counselling to stand fast in some place of danger.

"Our 'Britannia' opening would have delighted you out and out. When I got there the street was crammed. At last I got in, and heard noises that beat anything I had ever heard in my life. Really, until the time came for beginning, I did not know what to make of

it: yelling, whooping, catcalling, and all that, principally, however, from a bad lot in the upper gallery.

"When I rose and said, '*Now then,*' there was a general '*Hush! hush!*' Quietness came more and more upon the audience, and anything more attentive you never saw at Bloomsbury. I preached for forty-five minutes, and felt as if God would certainly bless His Word.

"Astley's is to be opened next Sunday, and the Sunday after Sadler's Wells. So you see we are not asleep. You will help us by your prayers that the Spirit may be given to make men 'willing in the day of His power.'"

The liberty which had been obtained for the clergy, through a Bill introduced to Parliament by Lord Shaftesbury for removing vexatious restrictions as to the numbers and places of public meetings, enabled them to carry on a parallel enterprise in similar buildings;* but a very strong feeling against the desecration of religion which it was imagined to involve, for some time embarrassed their action. The matter was even brought before the House of Lords, and the Episcopal bench was called upon to interpose its authority against the assumed irreverence; but Lord Shaftesbury seized the opportunity in an elaborate speech of exhibiting the desert of ungodliness which remained untouched and even unapproached by any of the Churches, and the threatened opposition was warded off.

* The Act did not touch the rights of the parochial clergy nor the authority of bishops. It simply repealed enactments originally framed to repress the Luddites, and restored the law to its state prior to 1812.

After several years of distinct action, Churchmen and Nonconformists formed the "United Committee for Special Religious Services in Theatres, Halls, and Mission Rooms," under whose direction the operations have continued to the present hour. In their Report for 1875–76, it is stated that three millions and a half of persons—a number nearly equal to the population of London—have attended the services. The London City Mission, which has rendered essential aid in gathering up the results of these instructions, has recorded many delightful proofs of their usefulness; but their real issues surpass human powers of observation.*

These activities were closely followed by the Civil War in the West, by which the heart of England was almost as much moved as it had been by her own still recent conflict in the East. The views which Mr. Brock had long entertained on Slavery naturally led him to look on the struggle in its bearing on that institution; and although he did not believe that either belligerent fought directly for its abolition, he held that the greatest hope of that issue hung on the ultimate

* Although religious services in the theatres of London wore the air of novelty in 1859, they were not really new. As early as February 7, 1836, the Rev. Richard Knill thus writes in his journal respecting a theatre formerly well known in the city :—

"In the evening preached in the theatre, Milton Street, formerly called Grub Street. The scene was novel and very affecting. Pit full, boxes full, gallery full—chiefly with rude children, affording good materials for future labourers. Lord bless the efforts of Thy people to illuminate and sanctify hearts in that neighbourhood!"—*Life of Knill*, p. 230.

supremacy of the Northern States. He steadily sought, as he had done in similar circumstances before, to raise his people, and, as far as he had the power, the public mind, above the exciting details of the controversy, and to fix their faith in Him who was overruling human purposes, and "working all things after the counsel of His own will."

When he heard that the industrial classes in Lancashire, face to face with hunger, had refused sympathy with the Southern Confederacy when it seemed to hold their lives in its hand, he was profoundly moved. He felt that a body of people who had instinctively pierced through all sophistries to the heart of the question, and declared that they would starve, or, in their provincialism, "clem," sooner than side with a Government which had published its intention to hold four millions of men in slavery, ought to be upheld. With his whole soul he aroused his congregation to bear their part in the world-wide beneficence which, month after month, nobly fed a million and a half of people, who, in a spirit not less noble, accepted the boon.

It will not be forgotten how the national anxiety deepened into distress when war between England and the Federal Government became imminent, in consequence of the seizure of two Southern citizens while under the protection of the British flag—an outrage for which it was indispensable to demand apology and reparation. There were not wanting journals on both sides of the sea which sought to blow these angry

embers into a flame, and never was there among Christian men in both nations a more solemn earnestness in prayer that the calamity might be averted. Mr. Brock, under a deep sense of duty, complied with a request to preach a sermon at this crisis in Exeter Hall; and the service having been fixed for the evening of the 15th December 1861, it became identified with a calamity of a different but most solemn and touching character. The Prince Consort, whose illness had for some time filled the country with solicitude scarcely amounting to alarm, died late on the previous night. The news, which reached most congregations before the morning services, met Mr. Brock as he entered his vestry. It overwhelmed him, and he was unable to preach; but on ascending the pulpit he poured forth from the depths of his heart a prayer, accompanied by extraordinary and still vividly remembered impressions on the people. In the evening he kept his engagement at Exeter Hall, the multitude already deeply awed by the pressure of the double sorrow. On giving out his text—"He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord"—he burst at once into the words:—

"Evil tidings, alas! my brethren, are in the midst of us to-day—evil tidings, for which we are wholly unprepared. We can hardly believe it yet; it seemeth to be but an idle dream. We are like men who reel to and fro: when we are forced to apprehend the fact, we are very much at our wit's end. The Prince Consort is dead and gone. The Sovereign of these realms is a

widow. Our beloved Queen is left in lonesome—lonesome because in queenly—solitude to mourn. She has hardly recovered the agony occasioned by the death of one of the best mothers in the world, before she is visited with yet severer agony by the death of one of the best husbands in the world. Men, brethren, and fathers, I ask your sympathy for your Queen; I ask your intercessions with God Almighty on behalf of your Queen; I appeal to your evangelical loyalty now, and I entreat that you will say as you have never said before, and that you will say in regard to her poignant and overwhelming grief, 'God save the Queen!' None but God can save her. Amidst the sorrows of her sudden widowhood, from Him alone can come the grace to help her in the time of need. In your private retirement, in your families, and in your several churches, I ask that, with one heart and with one soul, you will entreat the Most High to save her from distraction and from despair; and she will know, even in the multitude of such thoughts as hers must be, how God's comforts can delight the soul."

Then passing to the topic which had been announced, he heaped up into an oppressive accumulation the evils which war would bring, and then disclosed the relief which trust in the Lord would bring. His argument in favour of prayer was defended at the close after this characteristic manner:—

"An objector asks me, 'Is it the preacher's doctrine that God will perform miracles on this occasion?'

No; I tell you what the preacher's doctrine is. My doctrine is that God will answer prayer, and fulfil promises on this occasion. And if another objector ask me, 'Do you not know the arguments that can be used against the prevalence of prayer—even peradventure against its propriety?' I answer, 'I know what those arguments are, and I readily make the admission that I have sometimes, by some of those arguments, been held in suspense; but I tell you how I have passed out of the suspense. God in the person of His only-begotten Son has given us commandment to pray, and He has given us encouragement to pray. So, all the arguments notwithstanding, I take the commandment to obey it, and I take the encouragement to trust it. I heap no contumely upon the arguments. I utter no malediction upon the men who employ them. What I say to them is this, 'Brothers, you must be fundamentally wrong somewhere, because that which you deny, the only-begotten Son of God distinctly affirmed, and by His affirmation I not only abide myself, but I ask my countrymen to abide also.' And I say that it is revealed to us that humble and evangelical prayer, finds its way to the ear of that sovereign and compassionate Jehovah to whom I referred just now, and that upon such prayer He has been pleased to suspend the exertions of His power. He will be inquired of if we want Him to interpose for the prevention of a calamity, or if we want His deliverance or His aid; and being inquired of, that interposition and that aid will come.

"You praying for the President of the United States and his colleagues—God, directly and indirectly, will act upon the President and his colleagues. You praying for the press of the United States—God will act, directly and indirectly, upon the press. You praying for the pulpit of the United States—God will act, directly and indirectly, upon that pulpit. You praying for the Congress and the Senate of the United States—God will act, directly and indirectly, upon that Congress and Senate. Ay, and you praying for the people of the United States, that the angry and reckless ones among them may be out-voted by the coming out at last of the thoughtful, and intelligent, and religious to their proper position and their proper work—you praying for that, and God, directly and indirectly, will work upon the people. And then, back to yourselves and your country: you praying for our Premier and his colleagues, for our Parliament and our press, for our pulpit and our people—God will act, directly and indirectly, on the United Kingdom, as well as on the United States; so acting that these evil tidings, it may be, will not reach us after all; so acting that these dreadful compound calamities will be averted; so acting that, instead of the devil's war-whoop, there shall be the angels' anthem.

"One of the happiest, if not the happiest, Christmas the world has ever seen since the Incarnation, will the approaching Christmas be, if, in the meanwhile, God shall thus hearken to our prayer, shall sympathise with

our solicitude, and grant us our desire. Incomparably, transcendently grand was the song of the angels as it thrilled and reverberated through the hills of Judah; but, oh! ineffably and sublimely grand will the saints' song be as it rolls along the waves of the Atlantic: 'Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill towards man!'"

He always believed, and it was the general persuasion of Christian men in both countries, that those prayers had been heard when, through one word of the President, the tumult of the people was suddenly stilled, and there was a "great calm."

Chapter Fifteenth.

"We receive but what we give,
For in our life alone does Nature live; . . . .
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element."

—*Coleridge.*

THE demands of public life did not leave much time for travel or society; but with his extremely social tastes Mr. Brock was at home with all kinds of people who were disposed to be on friendly terms with himself. He often ran off to those of his friends who lived in the country to spend a day or two before some public engagement; and after he had rebounded from its pressure, he would collect all his children and repair to Sydenham, Hampton Court, Virginia Water, or other accessible rural spot near town, where he would become one of themselves to their exuberant delight. He eagerly sought knowledge from the conversation of men of superior attainments; and there were some among his stated hearers, such as Dr. Henry Foster Burder and Dr. Murch his former tutor, in the evening of their lives; Dr. Price, whom he was accustomed, when a student, to hear at Devonshire Square; and Dr.

Davies, the learned and affectionate Orientalist at Regent's Park College, whom he delighted to have near him. He liked, too, to draw into discussion on their own topics, persons whose pursuits had lain in other fields than his own, such as Sheridan Knowles the dramatist, Edwin Ransford the professional singer, and George Lance the painter,* all of whom for some time attended his ministry, and united in holy communion with his Church. He had a special interest in the conversation of eminent missionaries, entertaining them for weeks in his own house, that he might become acquainted with themselves and the people among whom they had lived. He formed in this way a close intimacy with Mr. Knibb and Mr. Phillippo, and enthusiastically loved Dr. Livingstone.

His continuous absences from London were for the most part limited to the few weeks of August. Twice he went into Switzerland with his two boys. He made tours in Wales, in Ireland, and in Scotland, where on one occasion a fall from the top of a coach, from which he was raised in a state of insensibility in a wild and remote region, had almost proved fatal. The parts of his native country in which he most delighted were the southern counties associated with his early life. To a visit, a quarter of a century afterwards, to the well-remembered scenes of his courtship in Gloucestershire, he affixes the note, "The most pleasant vacation I have ever had!" But Devon, which was first, was ever

* Note C.

deepest in his heart. He writes to a friend from Ilfracombe during one of these pleasant sojourns: "The neighbourhood here is really of the highest order. I had no idea of the grandeur of the scenery which lies about the indentations of this North Devon coast. A casual visitor could have no idea of it. I have been here before, but never had I a conception of what is manifested of the Eternal Power and Godhead."

A few days afterwards he writes to the same correspondent:—

"The day is one of the loveliest I have ever known: not one ripple on the sea, not a sound but the hum which comes softly up from the shore—not a suggestion but such as delights the inmost heart! Every day we explore some fresh scene of beauty: in every direction coming out or in upon some instructive manifestation of our Father's wisdom and power. We are looking out for wild flowers, according to the directions of Dr. Thomson at one time, and for anemones and madrepores according to the directions of Mr. Gosse at another. I have several specimens of the anemone now on my table, which we have secured at low water. One of them is beautifully open while I write, and yesterday, greatly to our gratification, a young one was born in our little vessel. It seemed to be, in habit and action, as much an anemone as its parent! A lovely rim of blue points encircles the basis of its tiny tentacles.

"One of my plans for August was to show William

the scenes of my boyhood. So we arranged that he should leave the mail-train at Tiverton last Friday night, and that I should meet him there. We did meet most auspiciously; and after resting at a little road-side inn, truly Devonian in all its appointments, we started in a homely phaeton for Culmstock, where my mother was born, and where my grandfather, a lineal descendant of Vincent Alsop, one of the ejected ministers, preached for fifty years. My boy was affected, and so was I, as I told him of one incident after another of my fatherless childhood. Then in the same homespun vehicle we went by a most suggestive road to Honiton, my birthplace. There I became almost the 'old man eloquent' as I showed William the old schoolroom and the old bathing-place and the old meeting-house, where my father was wont to give out the hymns with me in his arms! Most interesting of all to us was my father's grave in the churchyard out among the gypsies. Forty years ago the feeling against Dissenters in that town was so strong, that a corner of the churchyard was set apart for them and the gypsies! From Honiton we went on to Sidmouth, where I was apprenticed. There I lived in a most ungodly family for eight years; there I heard the word of life to my salvation; and there, after having really persecuted me for my religious practices, my employer admitted that it was no bad thing to have a saint for an apprentice."

To these home expeditions he added, one summer, a voyage to Norway. A party of gentlemen which he was

invited to join, sailed from Hull on Saturday, and on Sunday, being well out on the German Sea, Sir Thomas Acland, who was on board, and whom he afterwards learned highly to esteem, proposed that they should hold divine service, and that Mr. Brock should preach. This he did, after reading the Liturgy, Sir Thomas bravely leading the responses on the unsteady deck. Having been received at Christiania with great hospitality, they attended the meetings of the Storthing, and afterwards made some acquaintance with the scenery and manners of the country, which subsequently did good service in lectures to audiences in Bloomsbury and the Seven Dials.

But after eighteen years' continuous labour in London, it occurred to his friends that a somewhat lengthened absence in a perfectly new scene might revive his energies, and bring him back with fresh force to the closing campaign of life. The first project entertained was that of a journey to Palestine, which, of course, had many attractions, and to which he was for a time inclined. But on reflection he saw that the difficulties overmastered the advantages. He was neither a great walker nor a good rider, and he was on the point of completing the third score of his years. He turned therefore from the East to the West. His interest in the United States was of much earlier date than the Civil War, which he had just followed to its close. He had formed the acquaintance of many eminent Americans, such as Bishop M'Ilvaine and the Rev. Baron Stow of Boston, with

whom he occasionally interchanged letters on public questions. The Senate of Harvard College also had, in 1860, conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity; and although he declined to use the title until his church, six years after he had received it, passed a resolution urging him to do so, he was fully sensible of the honour which one of the most distinguished of the Transatlantic universities had done to him. On the whole, therefore, he felt assured that in visiting the country he would be received with cordiality, and would find around him a large field of research and instruction.

His deacons, in the spirited and generous manner in which they had always treated him, provided among themselves the entire cost of the journey, besides happily securing for him as a companion his friend the Rev. R. H. Marten, B.A., of Lee.

Some passages from communications which Mr. Brock made to his friends during the journey and shortly after his return will serve to indicate the line of route, and preserve some of the reflections which were awakened.

The Voyage.

"*Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, 1st May* 1866.—We reached Queenstown on Sunday the 22d April, and remained there until the evening, having had a very good service on board, Mr. Nolan officiating. The 23d and 24th were stormy, the wind blowing a heavy gale; but I was not at all ill, and did really enjoy the turbulence o

the wide waste of waters. I know now what Atlantic waves are, and what it is to enjoy confidence in God when they are running 'mountains high.' The 25th and 26th were most beautiful days, with scarcely a ripple on the waters. On walking on deck, I found at least thirty people whom I knew more or less, and they were all kind. Early on the 27th we approached the banks of Newfoundland, and for thirty hours all was thick fog. Then I was struck with the vigilance of the captain both day and night. One met him everywhere, with his eye in all directions at once. By twelve o'clock on the 28th the fog was behind, and all was again beautiful. Next day was all that a Sunday at sea could be. We had service, Mr. Nolan again officiating; the captain, however, this time reading the prayers himself. One thing struck me painfully. When the 'Absolution' came to be read, the captain gave way to the priest, who alone stood and alone spoke; he alone had authority in the great matter of remission; the captain had none. Of what is this the germ?"

"*Washington.*—Soon after our landing, after a pleasant voyage of nine days, we went away to the South as far as Fort Monroe, in Virginia. We took Washington in our way, where much attention was shown to us. We had interviews in private with the President, with several Secretaries of State, with General Grant, and with Chief-Justice Chase. The last gentleman invited us to dinner, at which several senators and other dignitaries were present. The chaplain of the Senate was

requested by the Vice-President to ask me to open the house with prayer. I did so with real pleasure, and I gathered afterwards that the service had contributed to a kindly feeling towards our dear old country. Another expression of kindly respect was given me by the request that I would preach before the Congress on the following Sunday. Arrangements were being made for my doing so, when by an accidental obstacle, which it was too late to remove, the Hall of Representatives, where the service was to be, was rendered unfit for use. I occupied, however, the ordinary pulpit of my friend the chaplain, when the audience, as the newspapers reported, was 'both numerous and select.' Let me not forget to mention that I not only walked round about the place where President Lincoln was assassinated, but that I saw the very place itself, and had personal intercourse with those who were with him when he died. It delighted me to be assured that he died in union and fellowship with Christ."

"*Richmond.*—From Washington we went still farther south to this city, going down the Potomac by steamer to a point called Acquaia Creek, and thence by railway. Immediately on landing at Acquaia, we found ourselves amid the signs of wreck and ruin from the war more painfully than we had been before. Burned bridges, half-demolished buildings, remnants of entrenchments and stockades, displaced rails and sleepers, fragments of military accoutrements, and many other things besides, told of the strife which had been raging just there. On

our way we passed the house where 'Stonewall' Jackson had been taken in to die; a brave man by all accounts, and as godly as he was brave: like our own Havelock, a veritable saint of God.

"The whole aspect and tone of Richmond was depressing. Everybody seemed to us to be under a cloud. Somehow, whether in the streets or in the hotel, there was an apprehension about us which came occasionally very nigh to fear. I confess that before I had been about the place an hour, I was anxious to get away. However, there were some things which it was well to see. When the army of General Lee had nothing left to do but to evacuate Richmond, the command was given to set fire to the city in different places at the same time, so that it should, if possible, be burned to the ground before General Grant could arrive. The grim and ghastly spectacle was before us. Richmond amidst its ruins was a commentary on Richmond in its prosperity. In its prosperity slavery was its glory and its boast—a gracious ordination of Jehovah, a system whose overthrow would be for ever to be deplored. This was the settled belief in Richmond, the belief of its ministers, of its merchants, of its tutors, of its statesmen, of its schoolboys, of its traders of every grade; the belief, moreover, of its wives and daughters and sisters! This was declared in the proclamation of the Vice-President of the Southern Confederation, and the illustration lay before us in shackles, whips, slave-blocks, and branding irons. Not to think of retribu-

tion, therefore, was impossible, as one paced the melancholy desolations, and stumbled over the scarcely extinguished embers of a conflagration which had been suicidally kindled. In its infatuation the city had attempted to destroy itself."

After visits to Baltimore, Cincinnati, Louisville, and other Western cities, the travellers found their way to the shores of Lake Michigan, and spent

A SUNDAY AT CHICAGO.

"In the course of the Saturday, the day after our arrival overnight, some Baptist brethren called on us at our hotel, and requested that we would preach for them on the following day. In great kindness, however, they took our declining in good part, and we had the prospect of being quiet worshippers and grateful learners in the house of the Lord. Early on Sunday morning, however, I was called for by a gentleman who was sure I should be glad to see Dr. Evert's Sunday-school, and that the Sunday-school would be glad to see me. Away accordingly we went amidst the heaviest rain I saw in America—the distance being hard upon two miles. The accommodation for the several classes and for the school altogether surprised me. There was a beautiful fountain playing right before the desk of the superintendent; there were several sorts of ferns and mosses; there were vases of flowers about us in all directions. There was an organ with its organist. There were accommodations, both for teachers and scholars, of which I

presume our own Sunday-school authorities have never dreamed; and both teachers and scholars were everything, apparently, that they ought to be. I have seen nothing of the kind more admirable, in all respects, than the Bible classes and the Sunday-school of Dr. Evert's church.

"At the hour of prayer I took my seat in the congregation, struck at once by the character of the building in which we were assembled. It was impossible to avoid looking carefully around, as you may believe, when I tell you that although by no means a very large place, it cost about £35,000 sterling. Excepting that professional singing, which really becomes more and more offensive, the service was greatly conducive to one's spiritual good. The Sunday afternoon was spent in a large mission school, where some twelve hundred persons were receiving religious instruction in different forms. Coloured people, both old and young, abounded, and most pleasant was it to see in this school at Chicago colour was made of no account. All were intermingled, as well the teachers as the taught; and to an onlooker like myself it was evident that God had fashioned their hearts alike. I spoke such words as seemed to me words in season, but the time for speaking them was limited, as nearly two-thirds of the afternoon was occupied in services of song. Again I questioned the managers, and again I was assured that these abounding musical services are deemed evangelically advan-

tageous. After a good deal of consideration, I still venture to doubt this.

"The Sunday evening was spent in retirement, the ruminations a little chastened by the thought that I was five thousand miles from home, and that I must travel all those five thousand miles back again before I could resume the companionships and the labours which I so much love. Then came the precious thoughts of a Providence which counts the very hairs of our head, and orders our steps one by one. Rather there came precious thoughts of a Father who does this, and many such-like things for us, and who does them for us always, because we belong to Christ. Well sang Watts, as in my hotel chamber I felt I could devoutly testify—

> 'In secret silence of the mind
> My heaven, and there my God I find.'"

On passing into Canada the interest of the journey did not diminish, and the personal addresses and recognitions which are made with so little ceremony in those mixed populations seemed rather to increase.

Droll Interrogations.

"Both at Toronto and Kingston I fell in with persons whom I had known years ago at home. Now and then, indeed, what was meant for a recognition turned out a mistake. What to make of myself at last I could hardly tell. Once I was taken for President Johnson, and was all but in for the disapproval or applause which the on-

lookers were ready to express. Once I was addressed as a member of Congress, and received a not very gentle intimation that I had better be down at my post at Washington. Once I was accosted as a Mr. Huntingdon, the application being made by a rather acrimonious little woman for the payment of my debt to her husband.

"'Do you never mean to pay?' she asked.

"'No,' I answered; 'I do not mean to pay.'

"'Upon my word, then, Mr. Huntingdon, it is too bad, for never was work done better than what my husband did for you.'

"'I never found any fault with the work: I daresay it was first-rate.'

"'Then why don't you pay, you who call yourself a Christian too?'

"'I do call myself a Christian, ma'am, but I shall not send you a shilling for all that.'

"'And you never answer my letters to you either, which my husband will make me write.'

"'Why, I never received a letter from you in my life.'

"'But I have sent several since the bill was due.'

"'Did you direct them to me—Gower Street, Bedford Square, London?'

"'No; what should I direct them there for? I sent them to your place in Vermont.'

"'I have no place in Vermont. I live in England, and my name is William Brock.'

"Apologies were forthwith offered by the little woman for her mistake, and I am not sure that apologies should not have been made by myself for not sooner correcting it. But we parted capital friends."

The Falls of Niagara made their usual overpowering impressions; but instead of attempting an original description, Mr. Brock refers his friends to Dr. Reed's account, whose descriptions of American scenery in general he verifies, and very justly admires. The route after that lay

Down the St. Lawrence to Montreal.

"We left Kingston on a magnificent morning in June, and were presently out into the 'lake of the thousand islands,' a fine expansion of the St. Lawrence, so studded with islands of various sizes that one stood at the bow of the vessel and wondered how she could be steered hither and thither and yonder. Her course was a labyrinth, but such a labyrinth of beauty, such a series and succession of glorious reaches and graceful curves, and alternating lights and shadows, that the spectacle was a kaleidoscope of the most exquisite picturesque.

"Having passed the lake of the thousand islands, we were before long on the look-out for the rapids—certain places where, for a mile or two, more or less, the immense river runs violently 'down hill.' There are several of these rapids on the passage to Montreal, the most dangerous of them being the last. Just before we

came within its force, an American Indian came on board from a large village on the banks to pilot our steamer down the tortuous and impetuous descent. I say tortuous and impetuous, for not only were we sure to go at the rate of twenty to twenty-five miles an hour, but we were to go in and out between huge masses of rock, some of which are so near to one another that our paddle-boxes would all but graze them as we passed. No sooner was our Indian on board, than he took the wheel with the air of a man to whom such responsibility rightfully appertained. I felt, as I marked the man's mien, that, so far as the arm of flesh was concerned, we were secure. Down we went and around we went, and then, after the manner of a snake, around and down again, sometimes seventeen feet at one leap, the waters surging and boiling over, and now and then bellowing as though they had us at last within their power. Once or twice we scraped either the shallow bottom or the rugged sides, and then it was the captain comforted us by saying that his boat had last year come to grief by going to the bottom just there. But it did not come to grief this time; and we were soon on quiet water, passing under that great marvel of the engineering world, the Victoria Bridge, into Montreal."

On Monday, the 18th of June, the travellers left Canada, and returned by Burlington and Saratoga to New York. The scenery on the Hudson, including an excursion to the Catskill Mountains, and another, some time afterwards, to the White Mountains, recovered the

claim of the United States to natural beauty, and kindled the heartiest recognition. A short stay in New York was all that could be afforded, with New England still to be visited. Travellers, as our poet has just reminded us, carry with them the colours in which everything is seen. It was natural, therefore, that there should be enjoyment in

A Quiet Sunday in Northampton.

"Northampton is a place of exquisite beauty naturally, and, in the esteem of those who have special interest in theology, a place of renown. Here Jonathan Edwards lived, and preached, and wrote; here occurred the memorable revivals of religion which were associated more than a century ago with his name; here, also, his daughter Jerusha became attached and betrothed to David Brainerd; and here Brainerd sickened and died and was buried, his betrothed becoming infected with his malady, and dying too. Northampton against half the places you could name as a retreat for a quiet Sunday! Its green lanes seemed just as sacred as its commodious churches; whilst the horses, fastened in long lines on either side the street to the venerable elms, seemed to some goodly extent aware that their owners were keeping holy day. The Connecticut river runs close by the town, and within a pleasant walk is the summit of Mount Holyoak, from which the beautiful valley of Connecticut is seen to singular advantage,

with its immediate display of the picturesque, and its indications of distant grandeur."

"The towns, villages, and hamlets, or 'corners,' of New England," he wrote a little while afterwards, "are most of them beautiful, many of them beautiful in the extreme. They reminded me continually of the old country, and of the old country some forty or fifty years ago. There is in nearly all of those I saw an absence of the modern crowding, and the modern noisiness, and the modern push. Vegetable life looked as though it had time to grow; animal life seemed as if it had some idea of the alternations of labour and repose; human life fulfilled its vocation as though there was something else to do besides buying and selling and getting gain. Not that the impression produced was one of dulness or decay; thrift, competence, contentment, neighbourliness, were the things which occurred to me. There was not a semblance of pauperism anywhere observable. I question whether there was a reputable family wanting bread, or an honest man in lack of work, all through the New England States."

Boston, with its society, its surrounding scenery, and historical places, very much interested the travellers; and the "Declaration of Independence" having been celebrated during their stay, they found they could cordially participate in the general enthusiasm without any shock to British susceptibilities. The final excursion was by steamer northward to the British Provinces, where Mr. Brock had friends whom he desired to see.

From St. John's, New Brunswick, he proceeded to the north-eastern extremity of the Bay of Fundy, and thence to Halifax, the place of his intended embarkation for England.

"*Halifax.*—Here, for the last time on the great Western Continent, I preached twice, my congregations on each occasion comprehending old friends of mine, or friends of old friends of mine, at home. Pleasant intercourse ensued, and having asked each other of our welfare, we had to thank God and take courage." Then came—

THE DEPARTURE.

"The Cunard Steamer, by which I was to come home, was expected at Halifax from Boston sometime in the night or the early morning, remaining only long enough to take in new passengers or freight. There was no certainty as to the hour of her arrival. It might be midnight; it might be sunrise; it might be neither, but something beyond or between the two. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to have our luggage and ourselves in readiness, and to wait as patiently as we could. The clock struck eleven and twelve, and one and two, when out boomed the gun in signal that the 'Africa' was coming up the harbour. It was a dark, drizzling, disheartening sort of morning. There were many passengers, with marvellously large and cumbrous accompaniments. The yard and the wharf alongside of which the ship was now lying were

without any light but a solitary lantern, flitting about like a 'will o' the wisp.' The noise and confusion, the collisions between wheelbarrows and carts, and carts and hackney coaches, bewildered us exceedingly. How, indeed, we got on board at all, with our persons undamaged and our goods and chattels safely within our reach, I cannot tell you. This I know, I never thanked two men with more unfeigned heartiness in my life than I thanked two Halifax friends of mine, who vowed, and who adhered to their vow heroically, that they would not say 'goodbye' until they had seen me and all belonging to me within my cabin-door. To their good offices I believe I owe it that I was not left wholly, or in part, behind.

"About four o'clock on Friday morning, the 3d August, the dawn just breaking, we were off and away to sea. On Sunday the 5th, we were, of course, at sea. The day being calm, intimation was given that there would be Divine service in the saloon. The captain of the 'Africa,' though under the same company as the captain of the 'Scotia,' did not share in his singularly misplaced exclusivism, but sent a request that I would officiate. This I did, but a very much better service awaited us in the evening amongst the passengers in the other part of the ship. They asked us to give them a sermon, and the captain consenting, Mr. Marten preached, the devotional services being conducted after our own fashion, the congregational psalmody excellent,

and the extemporaneous prayer responded to with an audible and reverential Amen."

The Arrival in England.

"On Sunday morning, the 12th August, we were at the entrance of the Mersey early, but not early enough to pass up to Liverpool with the tide, and we missed the opportunity of attending public worship. By noon, however, we had passed the Custom-house examination, and were well ashore. A telegram was despatched to the superintendent of the Bloomsbury Sunday-school, that he might announce my arrival to the children and their teachers in the afternoon; but so quickly did it go that it reached the chapel while the congregation was breaking up. Presuming what it was, the deacons regarded the telegram as addressed to them, opened the envelope accordingly, read out the contents with heart and voice, and then openly assisted, if indeed they did not formally originate, a most uncanonical but generous and cordial cheer! The Lord had graciously guarded us whilst we had been absent one from another, whereof, both in Liverpool and London, we were glad."

Chapter Sixteenth.

"Thy chastisements are love; more deep
They stamp the seal divine,
And, by a sweet compulsion, keep
Our spirits nearer Thine."

—*J. D. Burns.*

Dr. Brock's return was hailed with joy both in church and home. The congregation, which had been dispersed during the latter two of the four months of his absence, returned to the renovated sanctuary in a fortnight afterwards, when he addressed them with his old affectionate cordiality from the Apostle's words to the Romans: "I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift."

This continued to be as much as ever the spirit of his ministry, but unwonted clouds began from this time to cast their shadows on his path. It was not possible that a congregation should exist for the greater part of a generation without having undergone considerable internal changes; nor can it ever happen that the children shall be to the minister all that their fathers were, or that the minister shall be as much to the children as he had been to their fathers. With the inevitable diminution of the early enthusiasm on both

sides, there came into action, in the present instance, the tendency of all congregations situated in the heart of great populations to migrate to suburban neighbourhoods which have been enriched with interesting and commodious places of worship. It would seem that the difficulty of severing themselves from the associations of Bloomsbury had been so far diminished by the lengthened absence of the minister and the simultaneous closing of the chapel, that many found half-formed purposes matured, and the way opened for their departure. The pastor had quite as much good sense as to understand the operation of all these causes, but to a temperament such as his the changes which they produced were undoubtedly depressing.

They were coincident also with an event which touched him far more deeply, and to which some allusion is absolutely unavoidable. Before his tour in America had quite reached its close, the intelligence came to him that the firm of which his faithful friend, the founder of Bloomsbury Chapel, was a partner, had been shaken during the disastrous monetary panic of that year. His anxieties were somewhat allayed by learning immediately on his return, that although the enterprises and responsibilities of the house were vast, the embarrassment would be temporary; but complications from unlooked-for quarters arose, by which these hopes were overthrown. The same proceedings were of course taken by the church in that as in all similar cases in

which character is involved; and when an investigation, conducted with the utmost care by conscientious men, ended to its satisfaction, the result, it can be readily imagined, occasioned profound thankfulness to Dr. Brock; but it is not possible to measure the anguish which for many months had come to him through grief for his beloved friend's reverses on the one hand, and anxiety to discharge his pastoral responsibilities with unimpeachable impartiality on the other. His heart seems to have been too much oppressed to have allowed of much utterance either by word or pen. All that the diary contains is now and then a sentence like this: "One of the heaviest blows I have ever received;" and this on the last day of 1868: "Perhaps the most troublous year of all my life!"

It brought alleviation to the pressure of these anxieties to be called to some public duties which he discharged with unabated energy.

In the earlier part of his ministry, it will be remembered, he studied the questions raised in the "Oxford Tracts," and acquired deep convictions of the certainty with which their fruits would in due time appear. The subject continued to occupy his reading and his thoughts; and soon after the beginning of his London ministry he delivered two sermons, which were immediately afterwards published under the title of "Sacramental Religion subversive of Vital Christianity," in which he exhibited with startling distinctness the doctrines then proclaimed on priestly power, the grace of

baptism, and the sacrifice of the mass. When, soon after his return from America, the same movement had assumed a superficially new form, and had for a moment woke up the public mind from the stupor to which it continually tends, he seized the opportunity of giving further information and more solemn warnings in two discourses which appeared under the title of "Ritualism Mischievous in its Design;" while not the least service, probably, that he rendered on this subject was to prepare an admirable series of resolutions, which were adopted by the "General body of Protestant Dissenting ministers of the Three Denominations in and about London," and issued as their judgment "concerning the present state of the Church of England, and the duty of Protestant Churches in relation to it." This calm and luminous document was received with great respect by both the "Catholic" and Protestant disputants of the time.

It gave him, however, much greater pleasure to be called to renewed exertions in connection with the London Association of Baptist Churches, which he had assisted in forming a year or two before, and which he always regarded with paternal interest.

"Previous organisations of the kind," says the Rev. W. G. Lewis, in a paper kindly contributed to this Memoir, "had existed, but had collapsed, mainly from the want of some practical object of sufficient public importance to sustain the hearty support and continued interest of the churches and their officers. For a long

time Dr. Brock had felt that, desirable as it was to draw the churches into closer communion and common action, it was all but hopeless to attempt it, in consequence of differences of opinion and feeling which existed amongst the ministers. All such misgivings, however, speedily yielded to the cordiality with which those who were consulted entered into the design, and after repeated pleasant conferences, at which the rules were prepared, and other needful preliminaries arranged, the Association was launched. Its first meeting was held at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in November 1865. Dr. Brock was elected first President of the Association by the unanimous vote of his brethren, and in consequence of the interruption of his year of office caused by his visit to the United States, he was, upon his return to England, voted to the chair for a second year. Into none of his public labours did our friend more completely throw his whole self, and nothing gave him greater joy than the complete success which rewarded his exertions. He was an eager claimant for the privilege of entertaining the committee at his own breakfast table; he rendered most punctual attendance at all the business proceedings; he diffused the most genial spirit throughout its ministerial conferences, and was fired with the warmest evangelical zeal when he addressed its large public meetings. On one occasion, when he was expected to speak to the Annual Assembly at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, but was detained at home by an attack of bronchitis, he wrote a letter, which was at

his request read to the audience. After expressing his disappointment at being unable to be present, he urged the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ in such pathetic and forcible language, that the most profound emotion was produced among the many hundreds who were wrapt in attention to his fatherly and friendly appeals. I regret to say that all efforts to obtain this letter have failed, but I remember that he narrated how in a recent journey he had caught sight of the words '*Change here*' at some railway junction; and these were made the pivot on which were hung most persuasive remonstrances addressed to the unconverted."

That letter appears to have been accompanied by a very remarkable influence, for a succession of persons afterwards came forward to avow that it had formed the turning-point of their lives, and the beginning of their service to Christ.

"In everything connected with the Association," Mr. Lewis continues, "Dr. Brock displayed a rich loyalty to the best interest of the churches, and a depth of attachment to his brother ministers which had never been so thoroughly elicited by any events in his previous history," and then adds the following interesting facts: "The Association, in the twelve years of its existence, has grown so as to include at the present time 140 churches, with nearly 34,000 members in their communion. A new chapel has been erected each year in the metropolis or in one of its suburban districts. A Pastors' Aid Fund has been instituted, to increase the

stipends of the ministers of the weaker churches, and to render assistance in cases of special emergency. Quarterly meetings are held, which contribute much to the spiritual profit of the churches, and other evangelistic efforts are employed to provide means of grace for the teeming myriads of the metropolis. In the frequent meetings for united prayer and fraternal counsel the ministerial members of the Association find the greatest advantage. They are thus happily consolidated in a union which all appreciate, and not a few strenuously labour to make even still more effective."

Dr. Brock was further assured of the general esteem in which he was held by his election, in 1869, to the Presidency of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland. The duties of this office extend to one year, and include the delivery of two addresses from the chair. To these he gave himself with his accustomed labour and energy, and the autumnal address at Leicester especially was signalised by demonstrations of interest and fraternal love which filled him with gladness.

The church at Bloomsbury, which had the best opportunities of judging how much its pastor needed the expression of its affection in these years, seized the occurrence of the third of those septennial celebrations which they had been accustomed to hold, to present him with an address, accompanied by a casket containing a thousand pounds. He was naturally much touched by this kindness, and, while thanking them for it, took occasion to refer to other sources of gratitude. "We

began the church," he said, "with sixty-two members, and there have passed into it nearly 2000 persons, to more than one-half of whom I hope I have been God's minister for good [to their conversion]. Thus, our labour for and with one another has not been in vain in the Lord. It is His doing, and, as we all say right joyfully now, 'It is marvellous in our eyes.'" "At any time," he continued, showing that he discerned what was in their hearts, "would this proof of your attachment have been welcome; but specially welcome is it in respect to some sorrows of my Bloomsbury life in these later years. The change that came at the time of our great panic, and the consequences which that change involved, inflicted about the heaviest blow to which at any time I have been exposed. . . . However, I have recently been getting back to a goodly measure of my former cheerfulness and life. Christian sympathy and prayer have done their work both upon my heart and mind; and more than once of late have I resolved that afresh I will rejoice in God's salvation, and in the name of the Lord set up my banners. And, as if to confirm and encourage my resolution, here comes your generous testimonial, a call upon me—a most loving call—to thank God and take courage."

The presentiment of an approaching event seems already to have found a place in his mind: "I will labour as long as I shall have the strength to labour; and then, be that when it may, I will retire. Never may I survive my usefulness either as a preacher

of the Gospel, or as a pastor of the Church! Far be from me the undoing, by my pertinacity or self-seeking, of the good which perhaps I may have done. Wise enough may you be, in the due time, to suggest the necessary changes; wise enough may I be congenially to acquiesce. And if, amidst some quiet resting-place, in which, peradventure, I may be awaiting my departure home, loving messages shall come to your old friend, they will be to him as the oil of joy, the balm of Gilead, the wine of the kingdom, the foreshadowings and foresoundings of the great award!"

All these friendly ministrations, however, did not clear the sky. Events in his family life came on with deepening gloom, and to a right conception of these in their various relations and influences we shall be aided by the fittest pen—that of his eldest son, whose private notes may best be given literally:—

"The home circle at Gower Street after my own marriage in 1862, and my sister Hannah's in 1863, was reduced to my father and mother, Ellen and George.

"We all met on the Monday of every week at two o'clock—my wife and I, my elder sister, and in process of time her children. Frequently other guests were present—a minister from the country, an old Norwich friend, an American traveller, or some special personal intimate; but my father was never happier than when we were alone. All that had passed through the week would come up; old recollections would blend with the incidents of yesterday; and after dinner, there was

generally time for a long confidential chat between my father and myself. He was brimful of life and cheerfulness at these times, till the events of 1866–67 threw their shadow over everything.

"Ellen was the greatest comfort to my father during all those years. She was unlike any of us, and, with singular reverence and love for both parents, united a certain naïveté which enlivened and amused the household. Her marriage, which occurred in 1870, was a sore trouble in so far as it removed her from home, and especially as coinciding in point of time with the beginning of my mother's illness. She was much at Gower Street after her marriage, and a fortnight which she and her husband spent there in December 1871 is noted in the diary as one of the brightest spots in that time of apprehension and anxiety.

"My mother had had symptoms that caused alarm three or four years before her death; but the beginning of the end was in the autumn of 1871, after her return from a delightful holiday with my father in Cornwall and Devonshire. The winter that followed was a gloomy time. My mother could not leave the house; there were no younger people at home to relieve the dulness, and my father was often in the deepest despondency. Christmas Day, 1871, will not soon be forgotten by any of us. It was to be the last Christmas in the old home, for my father's decision was taken to resign his pastorate. We felt, too, that in all probability *one* would be absent at the next anniversary.

She kept up through dinner, and then the pain was too severe, and she had to retire; but she rallied so as to join us at family worship. We were all present that night, the grandchildren included, and my father's heart came out in one of those prayers for which he was so remarkable. We separated with a strange mixture of present anxiety and ultimate assurance. We never all met again."

The narrative may be interrupted to say that this decision to resign the pastorate was communicated about a fortnight after that evening in a letter to the church, in which the following sentences occur:—

"To continue working with you and for you as I have been doing would be the greatest pleasure of my life, particularly as in several instances your sons and your daughters are giving promise of their fellowship with you in consecration to the cause of Christ.

"But all human working tendeth inevitably to its end, and to go on indefinitely is beyond our power. Natural strength abateth. Heart and flesh fail. Infirmities gradually gain the upper hand. Whatever the desire to discharge the recurring obligations, the capacity for discharging them surely and imperceptibly decays. Of this liability I have become personally conscious; not to an extent, as I thankfully acknowledge, which habitually enfeebles me; but to an extent that frequently distresses me, and makes me anxious about the future. It is in the nature of the infirmities to which I refer to increase somewhat rapidly; and,

strive against them as a man may, it will not be long before their disadvantageous influence must be confessed by the kindest of his friends. That he is as willing as he ever was to discharge every duty of his position, they may be able conscientiously to maintain; but, when questions are asked respecting his power for discharging it, it is felt to be the safest thing quietly to hold their peace.

"To such an issue I am sure we are coming at Bloomsbury Chapel. Inability to do what its minister must needs do is growing upon me, and it is, in my judgment, a question but of two or three years whether I could occupy my post at all, except to the detriment of the great interests which are involved. This being my full persuasion, I have come to the determination to relinquish my post; and I hereby notify to you that it will be relinquished in September of the present year.

"I am quite prepared to hear some of you remonstrate. Not at all astonished shall I be to hear of proposals to secure assistance for me in the ministry and the pastorate. From my long acquaintance with your affectionate attachment to me, I can believe that some of you will move that my resignation be not accepted. Let me, as kindly as I can, foreclose all that. I have not come to my determination without much thoughtfulness and prayer, and, as the result of the thoughtfulness and prayer, I must abide by it. Believe me that I deem it to be beyond recall."

His son's account now continues:—

"My sister Ellen's boy was born in January 1872, and in about a fortnight later, after some days of hopeful improvement, her strength suddenly gave way, and before we realised her danger she was gone.

"It was on the very day when a new course of treatment had been begun with my mother with considerable hope of success; and when I reached Gower Street about five o'clock in the afternoon with the fatal news, I found that what was reckoned a satisfactory start in the treatment had been made. My father and she were sitting together, both more cheerful than usual, and it seemed cruel to destroy their comparative sense of comfort. The news was altogether unexpected. My mother, weakened by her complaint, bowed under it, stricken to her very heart: 'What shall we do?' was all that she could say. My father, always greatest under heavy troubles, restrained himself completely, and used all his strength to comfort her. Equally admirable was his conduct all through the distressing week that followed.

"The treatment took all the time till the middle of April, and those months were a most trying alternation of hopes and fears. The crisis was said to be past, and the medical attendance reached an end on the 4th of April, and at the close of the month my mother went to stay at Tunbridge Wells for a few weeks. She came back on May 21st, no stronger, and when she reached Gower Street from the station, my father, who met us there, was quite overcome by the disappointment of his

too sanguine expectations, and left the room abruptly, unable to conceal his grief.

"Buxton was next recommended, and on June the 10th, my mother left London never to return. She lived at 'Malvern House,' having her own rooms, and her sister Phebe as her most faithful and loving companion. My father, after seeing them settled, remained at home having no one but George with him, and he was there only early and late. My wife and I stayed at the old home for a week, and my sister and her children for another; but he was of course very much depressed, and the bulletins from Buxton only kept up the state of suspense."

While under all this burden of anxiety, the time for the midsummer morning sermon came round. He could not pass it by, but rather hailed it as a consolation. The desire to be present at the service was wider and deeper than ever, and the impressions which accompanied it were rare and memorable. He selected the words, "One Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple;" and thus concluded the whole series:—"My dear friends, I have thus, being somewhat of an old disciple myself, delivered to you my last midsummer morning sermon. My witness is in heaven that I wish I had preached more earnestly, more plainly, and more devoutly. However, everything must go now; the wrong by God's grace, to be forgiven, and the right by the same grace to be made contributive to good. My heart's desire, my prayer to God, is that these twenty midsummer morning sermons will not

prove to those who have heard them, the savour of death unto death, but of life unto life. They have been the pleasantest of all the services of a ministry of forty years, and I feel as if I could wrestle with the angel bodily, and say, I cannot let thee go until these have surrendered their hearts to Christ—until they have passed from death unto life—(I mean *you*)—until they have become wise unto salvation by faith which is in Jesus Christ. We shall never meet here like this again. Shall we meet in heaven? Now, your hands, all of you, and with your hands, your word. Shall we meet in heaven? 'God helping us, we *will*.' Then we *shall*, for God will help anybody who asks to be helped out of the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

"When," says one of the auditors, "the venerable preacher said, 'Now your hands, all of you; and with your hands, your word,' he eagerly and affectionately stretched out his own hand. It was an inspiration. Tears flowed on every side. Men and women seemed to bend forward like a field of corn before the wind to seize it. 'Ah,' said one to me, 'I feel that I must delay no longer; but take his hand and come to God.'"

The family history again proceeds:—

"At the beginning of August, he visited my mother, and his hopes were finally extinguished when, on the morning after his arrival, on asking her when she rose, she replied sadly, 'Don't you know? I never get up now.' He remained till the close of the month.

"Early in September news came which prepared us for the worst. My wife went down to Buxton on the 7th. George was to be married on the 10th, and we were able to wait for the wedding, which my mother was extremely anxious to have completed. My father left the marriage-breakfast table for the sick room, and the rest of us followed next day. My mother was perfectly conscious and collected, and in the most characteristic state of mind, calm, and thoughtful of every one. She had a most loving welcome ready for my brother and his bride when they came, and breathed a fervent blessing over their union. Her intercourse with my father was, during the four days of consciousness that followed, of the most delightful sort. He used to tell us, with a radiant face, the things that they had said to one another. The 23d Psalm was her last Scripture, as it was to be also his; and her last text, whispered into my ear on the Sunday evening before her death, was, '*light* affliction.' On the Monday she became unconscious, and lay so till Friday the 20th. My wife and I sat up beside her that last sad night. In the morning we had gone out for air, leaving my father and Hannah on guard. When we returned, the blinds were down, and on the terrace in front of the house stood my father waiting for us. When he saw us, he simply raised his hand upward. She had gone up higher.

"He bore the loss with the fortitude and cheerfulness which a great calamity always induced in him. We reached Gower Street, bringing with us all that was

left of her we loved, late on the Saturday night. Sunday was spent privately in the dear old home with him, and on Tuesday we bore the remains to their resting-place in Abney Park."

The following Sunday was to be the last on which Dr. Brock was to preach to his people as their pastor. The remaining days of the sorrowful week were spent in close study, which seemed so to brace his spirit, that when he came to meet the gaze of a crowded audience in prayerful and tender sympathy with him, he bore himself with the composure and vigour of former years. In the morning he took a review of his ministry from the words of its opening purpose: "I will go in the strength of the Lord God;" and in the evening, when many hundreds were unable to find room, he addressed earnest appeals to all classes of his former hearers from the words, "For my testimony among you was believed in that day."

It was an occasion of solemn memories and profound thoughtfulness to those who had long enjoyed his ministry, while it was not without interest to others, if we may judge from the following words from one of the morning papers:* "All who heard Dr. Brock bid farewell last night must have felt additional regret at parting, from the very fact that the revered pastor retains all the vigour of intellect and of expression which has distinguished him in his long career, and which is even more impressive now that it is mellowed

* The Daily Telegraph, September 23, 1872.

by time. He made, however, a good apology for not having 'lagged superfluous on the stage,' with the questionable ambition to die in harness. 'For me to have died in harness,' he said, with that peculiar earnestness, half-logical, half-melancholy, which closely borders on humour, 'might have been for the Church to have died too.' It is enough that he, being conscious of failing strength, has wisely chosen the fit moment for retiring, and that his flock has accepted—reluctantly, but in good faith—the assurance that his days of labour are past."

On the following evening an assembly, in which were many eminent men with whom he had acted in public life, united in expressions of cordial esteem and friendship, and in the course of the proceedings he was made acquainted with the handsome provision which had been made by his numerous friends for the remaining years of his life. On the morning on which his favourite Thursday lecture had so often been held, he met his flock at the Lord's table for the last time, and at a church meeting on the following evening, his resignation was formally tendered and accepted, accompanied at the close with that "grasp of charity" which had so often conveyed, with something like electric power, the assurance of special interest and affection.

"On Tuesday, 1st October 1872," so the filial reminiscences close, "he left his old house with less regret than he used to anticipate, and came to stay with us till he should see what best to do."

Chapter Seventeenth.

"My bark is wafted to the strand
By breath divine;
And on the helm there rests a hand
Other than mine!"

—*Henry Alford.*

THE course of the voyage was now brief but tranquil. There were, no doubt, natural tears on losing sight of the long-familiar objects. "The hand of the Lord," he wrote to a friend in the first moment of his bereavement, "is heavy upon me. I am a widower, and that at the moment of leaving church and home. But it is His will." When he had passed through the public farewells, and closed all doors behind him, he wrote thus to another: "The pressure upon me on leaving Gower Street was really formidable. One thing followed another so rapidly, and the things were so serious in themselves, that I was nearly overdone;" and to another: "The remembrance of the death, the funeral, the removal of furniture, the successive farewell services, with the deep, deep consciousness that I was out in the world to begin life again, and no wife to be my helpmeet any longer, overpowered me. Please to think of this whenever the idea may be suggested

that my going away was somewhat uncourteously abrupt."

But in his eldest son's house, even after he removed from it to his own rooms in Rosslyn Terrace, Hampstead, he found, to use his favourite epithet, a "congenial" resting-place. His feelings were studied with intelligent sympathy, and he gave back his own affection without measure, his little grandson, though unconsciously, contributing in no small degree to the revival of his old cheerfulness. He often became as merry as the child, and he was himself one of the first to notice that little Willie had acquired, by a subtle sympathy, the tones and ways of his grandsire.

It was very quickly seen that he intended to keep all his faculties in exercise, and to the uttermost to "fulfil the ministry which he had received." As his voice retained its former volume, and his person the aspect of complete health, the congregations which had long known him were eager to obtain his services; while he, in addition to the delight he had in his work, was impelled by the desire to postpone as long as possible any concessions to the inevitable diminution of physical power, so that he was not unfrequently carried beyond the limits of fair labour. His habit of careful reading was maintained with diligence and perseverance, and he gave himself with the application of his earliest studies to the production of new sermons. The tendency indeed to over-elaboration in his compositions seemed to have greater scope than before, of

which the discourse which he delivered on the occasion of the death of the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, and that which he preached some time afterwards at the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, were proofs. There was even an increase of certain long-noticeable peculiarities of delivery, which no words, perhaps, can better defend than those which Lord Clarendon in his History applies to one of his contemporaries: "Though in another man it might have appeared to have somewhat of affectation, it was marvellously fit in him, and seemed natural to his size and the mould of his person, to the gravity of his motion, and the tone of his voice and delivery."

But, to adopt the just testimony of the Rev. W. G. Lewis: "Great and noble as Dr. Brock was in public, there was an indescribable charm about his domestic life, for within that portly frame of his he carried a heart full of the gentleness of a little child, and enriched with a wondrous sympathy. He was not hasty in forming friendships, but those who were admitted to his confidence found it a pleasant retreat. He was one of the most welcome guests that ever entered the dwellings of his friends, and those who visited the sacred enclosure of his own home found him a peerless host. The troubles of his friends became his troubles, their interests were held in common with his own, and their children loved him as another father. Only those who knew him in the family circle and at the family altar could fully appreciate the genial cordiality and

rich fruits of his friendship. He would gently and joyously romp with little infants, and as they grew up into youth and maturity, his generous concern for their welfare deepened in its hearty solicitude."

His correspondence, it has been observed, had never been elaborate, nor did it become much more so with his greater leisure; yet into the brief, affectionate assurances of which it mainly consisted, he often infused searching and faithful counsels. To a young minister, for instance, he writes, on February 17, 1874: "I have no doubt that you have already learned lessons which you did not expect to learn. Our Heavenly Father has many ways of making us know what is in our hearts in respect to our conformity and our fellowship with His will. I am sure He has had many, many ways of making me to know what was in my heart, and by no means unfrequently I have been ashamed of the discovery. I had not been what I seemed to be, nor, indeed, what I thought I was. Occasion has consequently arisen for my humiliation and repentance, and thereupon have followed joy and peace in the Holy Ghost.

"Possibly some such experience has been yours also. If so, I counsel you to let it have its perfect work. Present sorrow will work out future blessedness. Learning your lack of spiritual-mindedness, you will give yourself to supply the deficiency; detecting either inaccuracy in your judgment or wrongness in your motives, you will call upon God to help you in time of need. Thankful may we be that He awaits our call;

not willing that we should find out our errors and defects in order to our despondency, but that we may the more sincerely and earnestly make Him our refuge and strength.

"I commend you to His care, desiring your unreserved and whole-hearted consecration to the service of the Gospel. Bear with an old man's earnestness as he beseeches you to renew your consecration day by day. Let there be no hankering after the world's amusements, no fondness for the frivolous literature of the day, no sympathy with the fashionable scorn of the religious habits of our fathers, no attempt to be the minister of Christ and yet the companion of those who are the enemies of His cross. God evermore keep you, and teach you, and comfort you, and employ you, and make you an 'imitator of Himself as a dear child.' In sincerity and loving-kindness, I am your friend and your father's friend, W. B."

The following hint to the guardian of a little boy is honest and sensible: "Let me put in a word of very earnest suggestion as to H.'s vocabulary. Pray discourage, with might and main, the use of slang and vulgar phraseology. Don't let him call you 'rascal,' even in fun, nor let him call his mamma 'lazybones.' Now is your time for indoctrinating the little fellow with what you will desire in future time. Modes of speech and modes of thought are very near akin, and if the boy talks rudely he will think rudely. The re-

membrance of your own mother will always help you. Fancy you calling her by that name! Why, you *cannot* fancy it. The tendency of the times, I know, is slang-ward, but it is an idle and a mischief-working tendency. Priggishness and prudery are to be shunned, English gentlemanliness to be studied. Bear with an old man's garrulity. With kindest love at home," &c.

In a letter of tender sympathy to his friend the Rev. T. A. Wheeler, of Norwich, he says of himself:—

"*Hampstead, June* 19, 1874.—I felt, when my sweet Nellie went away from us to heaven, that I was sorely in want not only of Christ's compassion, but of something outside myself to move me to accept His compassion. Never have I more strongly felt how fearfully and wonderfully we are made than in the hours of these ponderous and exhausting trials. It has been with me more than once that I have been utterly helpless, and I am not sure that I have not been listless too. Thank God for His free grace! You and I have known men by whom it has been misapprehended and abused, but you and I are the better and safer and happier for it just now."

The climate at Hampstead proved trying to him; and when he had used too great exertion during the warmer months, the winter so effectually assailed his chest as to lay him several times totally aside. He was led, in consequence, to "hybernate," as he called it, at St. Leonard's, where, in the boarding establishment of "Orwell House," he found medical advice which he

valued, and as much agreeable society as served to alleviate, if not to banish, the sense of loneliness which would steal over him.

A lady of his former flock, whom he very highly esteemed, and who spent some time with him during one of his last visits, has kindly communicated the following interesting recollections:—

"I greatly admired what I saw of his daily habits. He was always reading and making notes. Some of his old favourite books, he told me, he had read again and again for years, and ever with fresh zest. New books he read alternately with them, and his criticisms were always shrewd and entertaining. It was a delight to me furtively to watch his face as he was reading: he looked so happy, so absorbed, and so interested, and not at all disturbed by ladies chatting over their wool-work near him. He had a large store of books with him in his room, and he generally spent the day with them, except the hour after breakfast and half an hour before dinner, when he would come down on purpose to talk and make himself agreeable in the drawing-room.

"There were about twenty people staying in the house. He was almost the only Dissenter, but all seemed to look up to him with great respect as a Christian gentleman; and several, who were not themselves sufficiently interested in religion to go to church, were ready to talk with him on religious topics, and to listen to his opinions with deference. Indeed, his thoroughly cordial manner, his geniality, kindness,

and versatility made him a general favourite, and he was considered the life of the party. These persons were varied in age and character, but he seemed to be able to draw them all out, to speak so as to interest them, to make them feel at ease and to talk their best. He had such a cordial manner, that every one believed he took a lively interest in their affairs; and so ready was his memory, that he never made mistakes about any details he had once been told, so that he seemed like a familiar friend even to those whom he had known but a very little while. I remember we spent Christmas Day together; and although he must have felt lonely, and have thought of family gatherings long ago, never to return, he was the liveliest and merriest of all of us, entering into the spirit of games, and watching and encouraging all the hilarity of the young people.

"He took his turn with our good host, Mr. Notcutt, in praying at our family worship, and I remember how his prayers were valued, and how excellent they were. On Sunday evenings he held a little service, which all who did not go out attended; and very good and interesting these little sermons were. They were always most carefully prepared.

"He suffered much from bronchitis, which kept him in the house during all the time I stayed. He felt very grateful to Mrs. Notcutt for her kind and clever nursing, and she remarked to me how good it was to be with him, and see his patience and cheerfulness. There was no selfishness and no complaining, but ever

a courteous endeavour to make the nursing as light as possible to her."

From this retreat he writes to his old friend the Rev. T. T. Gough, on—

"*March* 20, 1875.—Peace be to us both! I have been here nearly five months, and have been a prisoner almost all the time. I think of leaving next week. What a blessing to leave for paradise! Thanks be unto God for our full assurance of faith in that matter!—Yours, in Christian love."

The diary notes his departure on—

"*Easter Tuesday, March* 30.—Left Orwell House, after five months' residence there. It was as pleasant a home as I could at all expect. Came to George and Edith at Croydon. Most lovingly received, and glad to be under George's roof. Harold a fine grandson!"

In the course of the following month he appeared at the annual denominational meetings, and was delighted to hear from his old pulpit Dr. Maclaren's inaugural address to the Baptist Union, and Dr. Cairns' missionary sermon—pronouncing them "good all round." Even greater satisfaction arose from his learning that that pulpit was now to be permanently and well occupied. He had shared to the full the anxieties which the church had experienced since the time of his resignation, and had given invaluable assistance in their councils, in the church meetings, and in the pulpit; and now that the Rev. J. P. Chown had expressed his willingness to become his successor, he was full of joy.

He was always ready with words of encouragement to members of his former charge, where he saw that they were merited and needed. "To me," he writes to one, on June 14, 1875, "your friend of so many, many years, it is, I assure you, a real comfort to find you alive to your high calling. I can see what some folk would deem very sufficient reason for religious inactivity in your weighty and manifold engagements. Plausibly enough might you object to undertake the labours of love which await us on every side. Thanks be to God for your determination not to object, but, according to your measure, to assume those labours, and to carry them out. May He enable you to hold on your course of kindly and womanly Christian beneficence! May He inspire you with courage, and fill you with wisdom, and supply you with patience! May He lead you into the secret place of the tabernacle of the Most High, and there show unto you His covenant! Peace be unto you, my dear friend, always from the God of Peace Himself; and peace be on your husband, and on your beloved children! My heart is enlarged towards you all!

"I am full of hope about Bloomsbury. I trust that the set time to favour us is come, and that showers of blessing are in store. No uncertain sound will the trumpet give, and no misguiding will the example give; Mr. Chown will be blessed, and made a blessing."

He had entered into many engagements for the sum-

mer, and it was not without truth that he said to his son George, in the course of June, "I am working too much." "Twice every Sunday," he writes in the same letter, "did I preach last month, and twice every Sunday have I to preach through June, with several week-day services besides. As the Sundays come, I have to be in certain places up to August, when I am to be in Llandudno till September. After that I have nothing better to do than to go back to St. Leonard's, there to hybernate again.

"One comfort is, that such work breaks up my solitude a little; but I feel my lonesomeness awfully, and not unfrequently get entirely broken down. However, such is the will of God concerning me, and I try devoutly to acquiesce. There are a thousand alleviations, of which I am very glad."

When he finished his engagements at Llandudno, where he was refreshed by pleasant society and the fine scenery with which he was familiar, he proceeded to the autumnal meetings of the Baptist Union at Plymouth. The recollections of his early life gave great interest to his visit, and the exhilaration which the society of his numerous friends produced led many to overlook the signs of advancing age, which could be distinctly enough discerned at intervals. The principal public duty which had been devolved upon him was the delivery of a parting address to four young missionaries. He had, with his usual conscientiousness, profoundly meditated his subject, and the large congregation, to-

gether with the deep interest of the event, called forth apparently undiminished powers. The devotional service, which was led by a former Indian missionary, rose to an eminence of spiritual feeling which brought with it promise of an unusual blessing. It probably would have been difficult to have continued long at the same elevation; and it was, therefore, even somewhat of a relief when the address took another level, and assumed that adaptation to the understanding and heart of an average audience which generally characterised the words of the speaker. The soul-stirring effect of the oration, deepened by subsequent events, was at the time remarkable, and the following reminiscence of Mr. Lewis does not represent it in too warm colours:

"His last memorable appearance at the Baptist Union meetings, held at Plymouth during the first week of October 1875, will never be forgotten by those who were privileged to attend them. His recent resignation of the pastorate at Bloomsbury, and the feeling that in future he would occupy a much less prominent sphere than that which he had so long filled, caused his numerous friends to gather about him, and listen to his voice with unusual interest. The address which he gave to four young brethren, who were set apart for service in the foreign mission field, was felt by all present to be one of the most effective pulpit utterances to which they had ever listened. Its vivid representations of the necessities of the heathen world, its powerful assertion of the sufficiency of the Gospel to meet

the requirements of perishing men, its incisive criticism of modern objections, and its prophetic confidence in the final triumphs of the Cross, were crowned by the hallowed unction which suffused the language of encouragement and counsel in which he spoke to the missionary brethren. The congregation, which filled the spacious chapel in George Street, was completely entranced by the energy which pervaded his every word. He was apparently in perfect health—'his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated'—but he nevertheless spoke as though his feet were already planted on the steps of the throne of God and the Lamb. It was his 'apotheosis,' and our eyes were holden, or we had seen the celestial convoy waiting to conduct him to the heavens. It has been permitted to very few of the servants of God to lay aside the prophet's mantle in such an impressive manner, or to bequeath to their successors such heart-utterances as were these—unconsciously to himself and to his hearers—his parting words."

In the same strain the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon wrote in his magazine:—

"It was grand, nay sublime. It was an address so wise, so faithful, so full of the Spirit of God, that had he known that he should never meet his brethren again, it was such a valedictory as he might have chosen to deliver. To us it seemed all it should be, no more, no less. Characteristic, massive, ornate, rich in words too ponderous for our tongue, and in tones which would have

suited none but himself; but withal homely, hearty, intense, overwhelming, as nearly perfect as can come of mortal man. It did our inmost soul good, mainly because of the soul within it."

Dr. Brock closed his visit to Plymouth on October 8th, and proceeded to his son's house at Hampstead, tarrying at Bristol with some relatives over Sunday, when he worshipped in the morning at Broadmead, and in the evening preached at Tyndall Chapel. The fine weather which had prevailed during the Union meetings had passed away, and was succeeded by storm, rain, and searching cold. He would gladly have hastened at once to his winter retreat at St. Leonard's had he not been under a promise to preach on the 17th for the Rev. Frederick Trestrail at Newport, Isle of Wight. The severity of the season and his rapidly-increasing indisposition might have warranted him in declining at the last hour to encounter such a journey; but he was peculiarly scrupulous in adhering to an engagement when once made, and in the present instance he felt doubly bound by regard to one who had appealed to him as an old friend, and whom he knew he could not have many future opportunities of serving. On Saturday, 16th, therefore, as the shortening diary records, he "went reluctantly to the Isle of Wight." Through the kind attentions which awaited him in his friend's house, he was enabled, with comparative ease, to preach twice on Sunday, and, as it proved, to bring his public ministry to a close in the evening by a sermon on the

fitting words: "Jesus Christ hath brought life and immortality to light."

On the following evening he attended the annual public meeting of the congregation, and spoke with an energy which gave little sign of his actual condition. The real tone of his spirits during all this period comes out more distinctly in the entry of next day:—

"Away through drizzle and fog across the Solent to London; missed a train; four hours late; reached George's a wreck of a man; downright ill."

"I went to the station," says his son just named, "to meet him, and was glad to find that he had had an agreeable journey from Portsmouth in the company of an elderly clergyman of the Church of England, who had known him by reputation for many years, and who expressed to me the great gratification he had had in meeting my father and passing so pleasant a time in his company. It was easy to see that he was suffering from the effects of the wretched weather, but he was evidently glad to believe that his visit had been a profitable one, and referred to his old friendship with Mr. Trestrail as good reason for exposing himself to the inclement weather and the drawbacks of an October sojourn on the island.

"Either on the following day or on the day after we called in a doctor, with whom we had an intimate acquaintance, who advised care and attention, but did not lead us to anticipate anything serious. He urged the importance of a speedy removal to Hastings; and

throughout the whole of my father's stay at our house he was constantly expressing a wish to get into his winter quarters as soon as he could safely move."

That longed-for transition was accomplished on the 29th of October, and on the following day he was visited by the physician who had studied his case, and was once more encompassed by the skilful nursing which had so frequently restored him from depression and weakness. Such a result was not again to be attained. A few gentle beams flitted across his path, but the shadows of the evening steadily closed in. He had been invited to attend the annual conference of "old students" at Regent's Park College, and with his accustomed attention he sent a note explanatory of his absence, which, as the last he ever wrote, may be here given. It was addressed to the biographer, and was the first which he ever received from him which cast a shade of melancholy apprehension over the spirit. The end of the journey, then so near, seemed already within range of the quickened sight:—

"ORWELL HOUSE, ST. LEONARD'S,
November 6, 1875.

"I am by no means a willing absentee from your College meetings this week. I feel that I ought to have to say something worth the saying under the circumstances of your meeting, and yet nothing comes to me to say—really nothing whatever. May be that our gracious Lord will dispense with our talking—with *mine*, that is.

"Rely upon me for purpose of heart to do aught that may occur to me to be done. I will wait and watch—one with yourself in deep searchings of heart after the thing which the Lord requires. Does the kingdom of God come with observation just now, and in forms about which *we* are to be concerned?—Ever truly yours."

The inquiries which the soul seems here to breathe forth with hesitation were soon to be answered. Only a few more hours came and went before the morning broke.

"My brother and I," writes his elder son, "were summoned to St. Leonard's by a significant message from Mrs. Notcutt on Wednesday morning, November 10. All that afternoon he was quite sensible, and talked on several subjects of family interest. There was no apparent consciousness of his own danger, and we did not refer to it. At seven o'clock he retired to bed. The doctor came soon after, and said he feared that life was a matter of a few hours, there being severe bronchitis in the capillary tubes, and very feeble action of the heart. The night passed quietly, but he was gradually becoming unconscious. I repeated the 23d Psalm by his bedside, and he followed me, saying at the end in a whisper, 'Amen, Amen!' It was the last passage of Scripture which my mother had repeated.

"Friday the 12th was a fine sunny day, and the effect of the change was marvellous. The breathing grew easy and hope revived. But in the afternoon there was much

excitement, and for half an hour his efforts to exert himself were very painful. Exhaustion followed, but he sat in his chair till evening, There was dry cupping at seven o'clock, but it was a forlorn hope. 'Lower than ever,' was the doctor's verdict. Only the nurse and I were in the room after ten o'clock. He lay very still, and I moved his head but once, into what seemed a more comfortable position. About one o'clock there came a change. A momentary look of pain passed over the face, which then resumed its tranquillity, and all was over."

It was the morning of Saturday, 13th of November 1875.

He had long before emphatically expressed his desire that his funeral might be conducted with the uttermost simplicity; and, therefore, without any service either at Bloomsbury Chapel or at the Chapel of the Cemetery, his remains were committed, with words of reverent prayer, to the tomb in Abney Park in which he had so recently laid the dust of his beloved wife. A simple addition has been made to the inscription which marks their resting-place; but his sorrowing congregation, desiring to have some record always before them, have placed a threefold memorial window, representing, in the act of preaching, our LORD, His Forerunner, and the Apostle to the Gentiles, immediately behind the pulpit in which he so often proclaimed with the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost the love of God through His Son Jesus Christ.

When the sail which bears a friend away to a distant shore vanishes over the verge of the horizon, we turn homewards, recalling with unwonted vividness the features of his character and the various incidents of our past intercourse. The prevailing tone of our spirit is generally one of sadness that we did not profit more by his presence, and did not show our appreciation of his worth by more distinct expressions of affection.

In the present instance the departure came so unexpectedly in the train of marked public services, that the tide of memory rushed in with startling power. Mr. Stanford gave, with point, the sentiment uttered in all the pulpits of his brethren immediately afterwards, when he exclaimed: "The power of his presence, the beat of his rhetoric, the grand music of his voice, his vital force, his magnanimous honesty, his strong, plain-dealing speech now and then, under which there was always 'the gentleness of a nurse which cherisheth her children,'—all these are gone suddenly out, and we stand stunned at our loss."

Still it is salutary, though mournful, to recall the past, making it march and countermarch across our minds until we acquire all the benefits which it can restore to us. Fortunate, therefore, it is, that we who have traced this history to its close may turn to the touching and instructive recollections with which the volume shall now end.

"THE LORD SHALL BLESS THEE OUT OF ZION:
AND THOU SHALT SEE THE GOOD OF JERUSALEM
ALL THE DAYS OF THY LIFE.
YEA, THOU SHALT SEE THY CHILDREN'S CHILDREN
AND PEACE UPON ISRAEL."

—*Psalm* cxxviii. 5, 6.

Recollections.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM BROCK, OF HAMPSTEAD.

It is with unfeigned hesitation, and after repeated attempts, that I venture to add any strokes of my own to the delineation of character which in the preceding pages another hand has drawn. The reader has received an impression, clear and complete, of a life which he desired to see; and he may have his impression weakened or distorted. On the other hand, if ever there was one, the more private aspects of whose character could bear to be faithfully presented as entirely consistent with his public career, it was the subject of this memoir. Perhaps, also, the public career can scarcely be appreciated without glimpses of a more familiar acquaintance. The excitement of a popular pulpit is the illuminated side of the sphere; to complete it we must include the strenuous preparation, and the reaction, painful or pleasant, of the home: or, again, the surprise that we may have felt at the occasional irritations that occur in conference or committee is forgotten as we are admitted to the kindly humours and happy self-forgetfulness of the fireside. Those who knew my father best, I believe, admired and loved

him most; and the plain tale which I have to tell, whether it please the reader more or less, is to the writer an almost unmingled joy to recall.

The earliest recollections which I have of him are of one of the most genial companions that a boy could desire. He did not take an active share in our games, or invent new diversions for us; and perhaps we thought him, both then and afterwards, a little too anxious and urgent about our lessons; but he entered with the liveliest interest into whatever occupied us of work or play, and the main impression left on our minds is of the most tender, considerate, and impartial kindness. In our illnesses his study was often turned into a nursery, as being the brightest room he had; and he was himself among the best and cleverest of nurses. His presence at all times seemed to fill the whole house, and clouds very rarely dimmed that sunshine. We were never so happy as when he was at leisure for a holiday. I seem to see him now as he looked in those younger years, wandering with us over Mousehold Heath, or chasing his hat along the Cromer Sands; now on the lawn at Guton among the bowlers, the gayest of them all; now driving us along the smooth Norfolk turnpike roads to some anniversary in the county at which he would have to preach. And on inquiry of others who remember him, as children, in those old Norwich days, I find that it is just that buoyancy of his which they most readily recall—the broad, bright face, the plain, homely, hearty manner

that he always had, the cheery tones in which he was wont to hail the arrival of friends in a phrase still remembered, though the precise point of it is lost—"Here come the chariots of Amminadib!"

With all this abounding cheerfulness, there was a weight of earnestness and of authority which, if it was felt in the church and in the city, was in habitual exercise at home. We were an ordered household. The parental rule was never for a moment questioned: I doubt if it entered our minds to question it. The mother's influence was of that calm, penetrating, undeniable kind which bears everything before it. The father added an element not more powerful, but more emphatic and eager. His affectionate anxiety for our good betrayed itself in his tones, his gestures, and the most transient expressions of his face. It found its fullest vent in that family worship which became in his hands such a reality of fatherly concern and filial obligation. It was unnatural, impossible, not to be dutiful to one who prayed for us as he did. There he seems to stand waiting for me, on one Sunday morning in particular, with a little Bible in his hand as a gift to me, the first I ever had; and on the fly-leaf in his own careful handwriting still stand the words, which were just the utterance of his daily thought about us all—"With his father's precious love, and earnest prayer that it may be instrumental in his early conversion to God." How could we but be "holden in the cords" of such strong and faithful love?

The enchantment of distance no doubt hangs about the Norwich days: yet it was a stirring atmosphere, that of the old provincial city; better for a boy to breathe than that of the monotonous village street on the one hand, or of this overgrown metropolis on the other. My father's share in what was passing was considerable, as this memoir has shown; and he expected us to take almost as vivid an interest in it as he did himself. We were soon initiated into most of the burning questions of the day; and if we were not, from our childhood, ardent Abolitionists, sturdy Nonconformists, and thoroughgoing Liberals, it was no fault of his. The names of Knibb and Burchell, Fowell Buxton and Joseph Sturge, Richard Cobden and John Bright, were household words with us. What days were those when Mr. Knibb was expected in Norwich, fresh from the perils of the Jamaica court-house; or when good Mr. Fuller, a full-blooded negro, on his way to mission-work in Africa, made his memorable visit bringing a couple of yams with him, and trying to make us say that we enjoyed the flavour! I could have been scarcely nine years old when, at what must have been infinite inconvenience to himself, my father contrived to push a way for me into St. Andrew's Hall, and to find room beside him on the orchestra, on that memorable winter night when Cobden encountered on their own ground the Corn-Law chivalry of Norfolk, with stout Mr. Edmond Wodehouse at their head, and bore away with him the enthusiastic suffrages of the

assembled citizens. The Parliamentary election of 1847 found the Norwich boys as strenuous politicians as their elders; we watched the contest as keenly, and as carefully recorded the results. The white cockade was worn proudly on our young Radical breasts as the poll proceeded; and when, after his honourable defeat, Serjeant Parry drove through the market-place amid the cheers of his supporters, we cheered with the loudest. No doubt there is a ridiculous aspect in which this juvenile ardour may be represented. To some indifferent philosophers it will seem that our fathers were turning us into prigs. Their verdict, however, may be questioned. Of course our understanding of these grave political matters was shallow; of course we came down "to see the battle" and to enjoy the noise: yet there was a residuum of conviction under all, and a healthy stirring of the spirit; and if all fathers trained their sons to take an early interest in principles which they themselves hold dear, might it not be better both for Church and State?

The focus of activity and of thought was St. Mary's. It is Sunday morning; the congregation are gathering in their spacious meeting-house, which has a certain simple taste and elegance about it, striking even a child; and about them there is a look of leisure, and much friendly speech and greeting as they enter, and a general sense of being at home with each other. All classes, or nearly all, are represented, from the worthy old pensioners in the almshouses to city manufacturers

and magistrates. The farmers and millers from the country round muster strongly; they have driven early into town and rested awhile in their Sunday lodging-rooms, and now they sit in their family pews, with their children round them, like patriarchs. What an array of noble old white heads there is in the gallery, where we sit! What an aggregate of solid sense and sound belief, with a strong doctrinal basis at the bottom of it, and, best of all, a warm experience! They sit with a certain grand air, as of people to whom Joseph Kinghorn has ministered, and who still expect to be fed with "the finest of the wheat." But it is half-past ten now, and the quiet whispers in which friends have been indulging are hushed. The well-trained choir are in their places round the table-pew; and into the little box under the pulpit good Mr. James Cozens has just stepped, senior deacon of the church, and charged with the reading of the hymns. Then the red baize door in the wall immediately behind the pulpit opens, and punctual as in later years, the preacher is in his place. Service begins—perhaps with the simple announcement of the line:—

"Welcome, sweet day of rest."

All know the hymn, and can sing it without book. Everything that follows is fresh, flowing, and vigorous. But beyond that general impression a boy does not usually carry much away from prayer or sermon; and the next thing I remember is the long waiting for him

in the chapel after all was ended, and the joyful privilege of walking home with him alone.

It was a great trouble to us all when my father was obliged to leave Norwich; and the change marks an epoch not only in his career, but in the character of our recollections. The elder ones of us were of an age henceforth to enter more intelligently into his objects and operations; and much of the difference in our impressions may be due to this advance in ourselves. We had been aware of his activities and of his successes in Norwich; in London we became gradually conscious also of his discouragements and disappointments. But still I am disposed to think that, with all the inspiration afforded by the surroundings of his later life, he was in himself not so buoyant and elastic as before. The natural weight of years was multiplied by the peculiar responsibilities of the new position. Friends rallied around him equally loyal and much more numerous. The charm of variety in his occupations was not diminished. The scope for his energies and sympathies, if less concentrated, was larger and perhaps loftier. But, on the other hand, there was of necessity a hurry of occupation, a strain, a pressure on mind and body, too incessant to leave the spring and cheerfulness of life unimpaired. When he sighed, as he sometimes did, for the Norwich days, we knew how sincere his longing was. He would never have left St. Mary's and his well-beloved Norwich, if the merciless east winds would have suffered him to stay.

What I have thus said tends rather to exalt than to depreciate the vivid interest of that London life. He threw himself into its labours and anxieties with all the fervent enthusiasm of his nature. It was a heat that generated motion in the house as well as in the church. The impelling force of it was felt in every direction. There was no idleness or languor among us if he could prevent it. Now it is one of the boys loitering in the hall, who is hurried off to school; then a servant is reminded that the dinner-hour will soon have struck; and presently the mother herself, leisurely occupied upstairs, hears the warning from below that she will be late for the prayer-meeting. Punctuality was a passion with him, and he carried it almost to an extreme; but it was a part of that whole forward spirit of his, which, like the sweep of a great river, could endure no obstruction in its own unresting course.

My father's own days were models to us of untiring, orderly, and conscientious occupation. The order did not extend to the surroundings; for his study table was usually a complete chaos of books and manuscripts, and his memoranda were dispersed indifferently over stray cards, backs of letters, and fly-leaves of books. But his engagements were carefully marshalled and his time regularly allotted among them. The dinner-hour was almost his only leisure. Breakfast was not over before he was in his accustomed seat beside the window, the "Times" in hand,

to be diligently read and mastered, and then flung down upon the floor as he rose to go to his study. Happy were the mornings when he was at liberty to stay there! Too often for his comfort, if not also for his taste, some distant engagement in the country involved a journey through the day; frequently he would devote the whole forenoon to that pastoral visitation which he deemed so essential, and in which he excelled so much; and then there were the inevitable committees. When he had the hours to spare, and no pressing preparation was in hand, he would devote them to some tough piece of reading, chiefly theological. It was his delight to read any book of special importance straight through at once, taking morning after morning over it till the task was accomplished, and often, if he could, following up the first perusal of it with a second. Then he would discuss its merits at every opportunity with those whom he thought competent to judge, till his opinion was fully formed; and some emphatic phrase, written at the end of the book, would stereotype his verdict.* The lighter literature he kept for a later

* The Diary shows that during his busiest time he trod with his measured tramp, sometimes more than once, over Hare's "Mission of the Comforter," Stanley's "Apostolic Age," John Smith's "Select Discourses," Morell's "Philosophy of Religion," Miall's "Bases of Belief," "The Eclipse of Faith," Conybeare and Howson's "St. Paul," Masson's "Life of Milton," Ruskin's "Modern Painters," "Tom Brown's Schooldays" (again and again!), Carlyle of Inveresk, De Quincey, Colenso, Macleod Campbell on the Atonement, Müller on Sin, and Maurice on Sacrifice, of whom he says: "Sticking to Maurice and Maurice sticking to me." Macaulay's History he drank with delight on one of his holiday months in Devon.—ED.

hour, and often, after the busiest of his days, read on far into the night. He professed, indeed, a rather pronounced contempt for most of the essays, travels, or tales that found their way into the house; but he seemed to have a considerable relish for them too, and usually proved to know more of them than we.

Preparation for the pulpit or the lecture-room was, as the reader of the memoir has seen, most strenuous and severe. There is a story told of the children of a certain enthusiastic artist, who were found running in desperate haste, as if pursued, to some remote corner of the house, and who gave the explanation, "Father's painting a sky!" Sky-painting was delicate work, it would appear, and demanded quiet for its proper execution. We could have well sympathised with the fugitives. Friday and Saturday, especially the latter, were as strictly kept by our father for his study as if a monastic vow had been upon him. The room where he sat was forbidden ground to noisy feet. Callers were an intolerable affliction, and had to communicate their errand at second-hand. If we were sent up with a message or a letter, we found him at his desk, the pen warily poised over the paper, the laborious conception slowly flowing into the selected words, the balanced phrases, the sonorous sentences which he loved to use, the whole man, mind and body, engrossed in the effort, and even the lips unconsciously following the regular movements of the fingers. When he came down to his meals, the shadow of his sermon never left him. He talked little

in those days, and was impatient of interruptions. The load seemed to grow greater and heavier as the Saturday wore on; but Sunday morning came, and brought relief.

I cannot recall, looking back upon those years, the slightest trace in my father of what would be called the professional spirit. It is much easier to think of him as the man than as the minister. His work was more than his work to him; it was his life. "Now we live if ye stand fast in the Lord," is the natural expression of his habitual feeling. "Bloomsbury" would have been found written on his heart. To hear him speak of the place, you would have thought it possessed of an organic existence, the sum of all that was breathing in its members, or being wrought out within its walls. To love Bloomsbury was at once to be his friend; to be leaving Bloomsbury was a kind of calamity, which drew out his deepest concern. His inner thermometer seemed to rise and fall with the temperature of his church. A good prayer-meeting there supplied him with comfort for all the week; a passing misunderstanding there would weigh upon his mind like a mountain. If conversions were multiplied, it was meat and drink, oil and wine, to him; when they seemed to slacken, he passed into the thick clouds of despondency. He positively hungered for the tokens of spiritual prosperity. He was keenly sensitive to the slightest symptom of progress or discouragement. I used to wonder why one so strong and resolute could care to open all

his heart to a mere stripling, and to take counsel and comfort from my inexperience. I wondered, too, how he came to be so easily cast down by an ignorant criticism or an unintentional slight, and why a few kind words of appreciation made his eye light up so brightly. Others may have shared in the surprise. But now that desire for sympathy appears to me a part of his whole large, eager, fervent character; just as indifference to it may be associated with a shallower faith and an inferior devotion. The extreme sensitiveness of his nature was undoubtedly an element of his power. It enabled him to respond instinctively to the slightest approach of confidence on the part of others. It kept him in a state of habitual concern about their welfare, and made him swift to detect the first symptoms of backsliding or inconsistency. It prompted the pathetic appeal or the urgent pastoral letter, which were so often blessed to the revival and restoration of the separate souls with which he had to deal. There was a resemblance in many points between his character and that of his favourite model, the Apostle Paul. The same quick susceptibility was there; the same openness of feeling and utterance; the same vigilance in watching over men; something of the same yearning after their salvation—

> "So unto thee it was given
> Many to save with thyself;
> And, at the end of thy day,
> O faithful shepherd, to come
> Bringing thy sheep in thy hand!"

His incessant public engagements were never permitted to divert our father's thoughts and sympathies from his home. Everything there, down to the most minute details, continued to interest him. The small failures and triumphs of our school-life he was never tired of discussing with us; his only vexation being when any of us (to use his own phrase) were too "secretive." He entered freely into all our friendships and relaxations. The August holidays we usually spent all together; and what pleasant weeks he made for us about Dartmoor, or by the Menai Straits, or in his own native neighbourhood of Honiton! In his longer trips he always tried to make one or both of his boys his companion; and he would delight to see us starting for a first serious climb up Cader Idris or the Wengern Alp, while he stayed by the stream or sauntered in the meadows, ready to watch our descent and to sympathise in the exercise which he could not always share. Scenery of all kinds was a constant enjoyment to him; but it was equalled, and sometimes it was spoiled, by his concern for the people of the places which he visited. The crétins in the valley of the Rhone were a sore trouble to him, and so were the unquenchable Irish beggars. I remember how one day, during a drive from Galway to Clifden, in Connemara, a squad of little Irishmen, stark naked, raced for a mile beside our car, laughing at our protestations; till at last my father, all his patience gone, snatched the whip from the driver, and, with no unskilful hand,

switched it on the back of the nearest urchin. The boy was hurt, and at the unexpected display of resolution the whole pack drew off. My father soon began to look uncomfortable, but he said nothing. That night I heard him turning very restlessly in his bed, and inquired if anything was wrong. "Yes," he said, "it was that boy." He feared he had been hasty, and might have hurt him badly. I tried to reassure him, but his spirits were all gone. Next day we were to return over the same road. As we neared the scene of the encounter, my father was on the watch, and his hand went into his pocket. Soon the array of beggars reappeared, and amongst them our hero, none the worse apparently for his whipping, and running with the rest. My father's face brightened; he beckoned to the lad, slipped something into his hand, and received in return a bow and a smile which seemed to say that any amount of the lash would be willingly accepted on the same terms!

Our Christmas Day at Norwich was, in the eyes of the children at least, a poor affair. It seemed hard, in the very land of turkeys, to have to be content on that day with the barest dinner of the whole year, the only compensation being a larger log upon the fire. But the kitchen appliances were consecrated for the time to the office of roasting meat and boiling dumplings for the dear old women belonging to St. Mary's, who appeared in a body, each armed with cloth and basin, to carry off the spoil. I hope we did not grudge

them what they got; certainly it was no disappointment to learn that in London this venerable institution was not to be revived. Christmas became really Christmas with us after that; and each year our father seemed to look forward to it more eagerly, and to enjoy it with a keener relish. It was good to see him when we were all seated, with his grandson Arthur at his side, beaming at my mother across the length of the table, and rubbing his hands after the vigorous manner which betokened his moments of social satisfaction. It was still better to be with him later in the evening, when we were frequently joined by our neighbour, Mr. Pattison, and his family, and by good Dr. Benjamin Davies and his delightful wife. A fine time we sometimes had. Study and drawing-room, opening into each other, were turned for the hour into a playground; old and young became playfellows; and a notable sight it was to watch the Hebrew professor, with his eyes carefully bandaged, grasping the air or the window-curtains at blind-man's-buff; or presently to have pastor and professor compelled, at the turning of the trencher, to execute manœuvres across the circle in response to the pseudonyms prepared for them beforehand. They took their reward afterward in the hour of intimate fireside talk which the elders of the party reserved for themselves.

That house in Gower Street became to one so open to the power of local associations almost like a part of himself. He believed it to be not only the healthiest,

but the most desirable spot for residence in all England; and he was never tired of exposing the modern folly, as he deemed it, of preferring the clay and stucco of a fashionable suburb to the gravel soil and solid superstructures of the Bedford estate. To return to that house from his holiday was as great a delight to him as to quit it for the most tempting trip; and he would expatiate among its spacious rooms and its lofty staircases, as if he could not breathe properly elsewhere. And indeed he could work nowhere but in that study; he could at last scarcely sleep with comfort except in that chamber. As we moved away, one after another, and settled in houses of our own, the old house became quite too large for those who were left; yet he could not endure the thought of having to remove from it. "I have lived here," he would say, "and here I want to die." The difficulty was solved for him in due time. When once my mother went away for her last illness all the charm of the place seemed to vanish too. He left it at last with positive satisfaction. He would not have cared to live in it again. But he retained his preference for the town; and during the term of his residence in Hampstead, he always seemed to miss the ceaseless stir of that mighty London movement of which his own life had been so long a part.

Of the anxiety which he continued to cherish for the moral and spiritual welfare of us, his children, I scarcely venture to write; for no words of mine can describe it. The remarkable thing is, that it was so

intense and at the same time so considerate. The curb which he kept on his natural impatience must have been tremendous; for with us he was most patient and forbearing, even when we disappointed him. His heart was set on our distinguishing ourselves at school; but if we failed, he made the best of it, and only tried to point out the faults that had contributed to the failure. He expected to hear of our advancing in business; but when a vacant post in the office went to some one else, or an advance in salary was withheld, his counsel was, "Resolve more prayerfully than ever to be *worth* the larger salary." The growth of the congregation which, in process of time, his elder son was called to raise, was an object of solicitous thought to him; and, with his ardent spirit, he must often have longed for its more rapid progress; but he never breathed a whisper of dissatisfaction; his words were invariably words of approval, confidence, and congratulation. A serious defect in our character, or the neglect of a serious duty, he pursued, on the other hand, with all his power, until it was amended. The taciturnity of one child, the indolence or inattention of another, would form the theme of letter after letter, tracing the fault to its origin, and pressing the need for divine help no less than for personal resolution and improvement. The slightest hint on our side of religious anxiety would be answered instantly by the most affecting assurances of fatherly encouragement. The joyful secret was at once communicated by one parent to the other; and the

reply was always from them both. We felt that our conversion to an earnest Christian life and character was the one thing of all others that would fill their hearts with the *nunc dimittis* of grateful satisfaction.

My father's manner of conducting worship in the family has been noticed in the Memoir, and was a subject of frequent remark among his friends. At home, it was usually quite a short service; a few verses of Scripture were read, and the prayer succeeded, in language simple enough for the youngest to follow, and full of reference to everyday life, its lessons, its business, and its amusements. We were often mentioned by name; and so were friends at a distance, or in circumstances of trouble. The little service was thus always real and telling; but there were times when the earnestness of it became intense. Our father never prayed *at* us; but if one was going on a given day to boarding-school, or another about to enter on commercial life, or if he himself was to be absent from us for awhile, the prayer *for* us was one to be remembered. At such times he would also invite us into his study for separate conversation and prayer. Every Saturday evening, for many years, those of us who were at home had a private appointment with him, the boys one week, and the girls the next. It was rather a formidable step to walk up at nine o'clock to that study door, and to enter for that specific purpose. The sermon, newly finished, or perhaps still labouring through its final sentences, would be lying on the desk; his own heart, after the two long

days of preparation, was full of great subjects; and then he would leave the sermon and open his heart to us. If during the week there had been any slip in speech, any misdemeanour in conduct, this was the time to hear of it. If there lay upon his mind any burden relating to our future, it was now disclosed. Then came appeals to our confidence, and expressions of anxiety for our salvation, whose delicacy was only surpassed by their importunity. It seems a wonder to us now that we could have remained so long mute before those appeals, and been so slowly melted by those anxieties. The prayer that followed was the outpouring of a father's heart on the subjects that had just occupied his thoughts. When we rose from our knees, kissed him, and left the room, I fear it was sometimes with a simple sense of relief that the ordeal was over; but sometimes heart and eyes were full. And as, one after another, we all came humbly to adopt his Saviour as our Saviour, and his God as our God, we traced to those Saturday evenings one of the master-influences which had kept us from evil, and guided us, by degrees, to our Redeemer. The custom did not cease with our conversion. There his sons first learned to open their lips in prayer, kneeling at his side. There we talked over our perplexities, and began at length to take his burdens upon us, and to enter into his inmost thoughts. There, on particular occasions, as when he was about to leave home for his long American journey, he sought our prayers, and we, in turn, were enabled to commend

him to that Divine protection which through so many years he had never failed to invoke on our behalf.

The shadows which in course of time began to gather thick round that happy home were of a kind peculiarly trying to one of my father's disposition. A sudden shock of sorrow, even though it threatened to be overwhelming, he would gird up his loins to endure. He was like a rock then in the midst of the waves. But the principal trial ordained for him was to be a slow and lingering one. He had to see the one whom he loved best, on whose wise and unremitting care he had allowed himself to become dependent in a thousand ways, pass slowly, but too surely, into the grasp of a disease prolonged and almost certainly incurable. He must watch her who was naturally better fitted to watch him, through long and bitter alternations of hope and despondency. He must order the details of the household, and superintend the management of the sick-room; and all the while he must prosecute his public work, and bear the pressure of his own declining years. The result was inevitable. It was soon perceptible, even to strangers, in his looks, his tones, and his very walk. The entries in his diary and the allusions in his letters betray the vehemence of the suffering through which he was conscious of passing. "Rough wind and east wind," he often used to say, "were blowing at one time." Everything in the church and in the world assumed in his mind the sombre colouring of his disordered home. It was a trying time for his friends as well as for him-

self. How he bore up at all, with what secret searchings of heart, with what strong crying and tears, amidst what temptations to repine and even to rebel, is known only to that ever-present Friend who at first "saw him under the fig-tree," and on whom he never failed to cast his care.

For he did bear up, even while the trial was at its height, and he had seasons of sunshine too. The constant visits of his children and his grandchildren never failed to cheer him. The sympathies and intercessions of his friends, and especially of his own people, were a balm to the wounds of his spirit. Our mother's own unselfish devotion was never more conspicuous than in the command which she kept of her own feelings; and her constant thought was how to lighten his load. She was his very opposite. Her slow suffering was usually borne with a serene composure which did not astonish us, because it was so exactly like her. Her patience was the most effectual curb on his impatience. Her unbroken peace of mind filled him with praise and kindled his own faith; and so, as the end drew near, he rose clear out of his despondency. We, their children, shall never forget the last days which our parents spent together on earth. They clung to one another with an unconcealed ardour of attachment, which in ordinary times had been covered from us with a veil of dignified reserve; and yet they were prepared to separate. They seemed at times to be lifted above the earth, while yet the one was racked with pain and the other

suffering the even keener pangs of sympathy. What he taught us to think of her when she was gone is now our thought of them both: they are not lost, they were scarcely disunited; they are "at home with the Lord."

Three years, however, elapsed before he followed her, and it was a period with distinct purposes and with marked characteristics. A notable reaction of spirit accompanied the relief from those regular pastoral obligations which had been for a good while almost more than he could bear. Even the sense of the recent loss was at first soothed by the assurance of her release from hopeless suffering, and glorified by the precious memory of her dying words. When he had established himself—as, with his usual love of personal freedom, he determined to do—in quarters of his own at the foot of Hampstead Hill, with his favourite authors round him, his son's house hard by, and a circle of old friends within easy reach, it might for the moment have seemed that the Sabbath of his life had really dawned. By degrees, however, the sense of loneliness deepened; bodily infirmities crept up, and could not be charmed away; and it became apparent how irreparable was the stroke which had taken from him, at the time which they had long hoped to spend in congenial companionship, the partner of nearly forty years.

There was an agreeable variety, too, and a considerable amount of enjoyment in his life at Rosslyn Terrace. Callers were numerous, from the children who came up with loving messages and invitations from the members of his former flock, to the veterans of his own

generation, full of the old battles in which they had fought together, and of the signs of the coming age. Younger ministers were especially welcome. He seemed to repeat his own earlier life in hearing of their successes and in attempting to relieve their perplexities. He took to answering the letters which poured in upon his leisure in a full, deliberate fashion, the opposite of his usual style. Much of his time was necessarily spent in reading, and his relish for it seemed to be sharpened by exercise. He would sit for hours pondering any great deliverance on questions of scientific or religious interest; and he pursued with almost equal care the criticisms, explanations, and rejoinders that followed. New books he waited for more anxiously than ever; but he still adhered loyally to the familiar companions of his solitude, and delighted to enlarge on the profit which he derived from their reperusal. The mornings soon passed in occupation of this kind. Then came the evenings in society, when he would bring out the results of his reading, and compare them with what others thought; and again there were his frequent expeditions into town, and the daily and almost hourly intercourse with his children. The grandchildren became now a peculiar pastime to him. Their presence linked him with the generations following, and drew gently back the curtain of the past. He loved to see them playing in his room and lightening its solitude; or himself to pay a visit to "precious Harold" at Highgate, which would waken many a touching memory, and draw down a patriarch's blessing upon "Ellen's boy."

The earnestness of his old spirit was unabated through these closing years. At leisure in one sense, in an another he was never more occupied. "The care of all the churches" seemed to lie upon his heart. I remember the kind of awe with which he first began to recognise the new order of ministry which his retirement was to involve. It came over him on being called to preach, at John Street, the funeral sermon for Mr. Noel, and then, soon afterwards, to render a similar service after the unexpected and early death of Dr. Haycroft at Leicester. He was not, then, to serve merely as an occasional supply; his aid was to be looked for in emergencies, and in the general behalf of the Church. It was with quite a new consecration that he gave himself to his work. He prayed in his closet for the many brethren to whom, in town and country, it became his privilege to minister, or who confided to him their individual difficulties; he threw out his sympathies with a broader volume than ever, and he stood as with his loins girded to receive and respond to the calls that came. Nearest of all to his heart lay his own well-beloved Bloomsbury, from whose roll he never withdrew his name, and whose fortunes he followed with a parental intensity of interest. Next to that came St. Mary's at Norwich, and then our own church at Hampstead. He was of necessity, as well as by choice, thrown much amongst us. One might have expected that he would crave the throng, the stir, the large activities to which he had so long been accus-

tomed, and especially that his patience as a hearer would be limited. But he entered into the concerns of the smaller sphere with all his natural warmth, and sought to revive, for our benefit, the varied experiences of his own ministry. He came in and out as, indeed, a "father in God," preaching to us occasionally with that peculiar unction which was now mellowed with his age, taking a willing part in our ordinary meetings, and most often, till his engagements multiplied, sitting Sunday after Sunday in our midst, the most attentive and considerate of hearers. If the preacher was not without his anxieties in the prospect of that presence, they vanished at once. No word of criticism ever dropped from him except accompanied by the most affectionate appreciation. He was a real blessing to us all. There grew up a distinct feeling of personal relationship between him and our Hampstead people, of every church and class. We would willingly have retained him amongst us, and dwelt under his shadow. No truer mourners stood at last by his open grave than some who only in these later days had come to know and love "the Doctor."

One gracious design of Providence in sparing him became abundantly clear to himself as well as to us. It will have been gathered from preceding remarks that my father was prone to take anything but a hopeful view of the results of his preaching. No one who simply saw him in the pulpit, aglow with the inspiration of his subject, could conceive of the depth

of depression into which, within an hour, he might permit himself to sink. "I rarely come down into my vestry," he confessed once in conversation with Mr. Noel, "without discomfort and the sense of failure." "And I," was the equally characteristic reply, "as rarely with them." The depression was sometimes relieved and reproved, in earlier days, by instances of unexpected success. He had come home one Sunday evening at Norwich from delivering the second of his "Fraternal Appeals" to young men at St. Mary's. The chapel had been crowded, and the interest had been extreme; but he threw himself down on the sofa, covered his face with his hands, and groaned out his fear that the appeals were, after all, to prove unavailing. At that very moment a knock came at the door, and a caller asked to see him. It was a young man in anxiety of mind, to whom that very sermon had been made the arrow of conviction. My uncle, William Bliss, then a boy living in the house, was present, and remembers the joyful reaction of feeling which the incident caused; and of course my father was seldom without many most blessed tokens of a successful ministry; but while they cheered they never overcame that constitutional despondency. It was reserved till the end of his days for him to see, as in goodly measure he came to see, the abundance of the grace with which his life's labours had been crowned. Travelling, as he now did, from place to place in the country, and finding hospitality in many homes, the circle of his

observation became extended; and people somehow found it easy to open up their hearts to this old man, whose naturally cordial manner had now added to it the pathetic touch of sorrow, and whom, perhaps, they should never meet again. So they came to the houses where he stayed, or lingered behind in the chapels where he preached, to tell him of what, in days gone by, he had been the means of doing for their souls. By degrees it became clear to him that his work at Bloomsbury had been God's message to a multitude beyond the accustomed congregation. Here he met with one who, coming to London for some critical surgical operation, spent his Sunday there, and had been "girded with strength" for the morrow's trial; here with another, in whose heart despair was prompting suicide, rescued there, by some great Gospel word, from the tempter; and often with those whose youthful steps had been sustained along the slippery paths of city life by the appeals, half fatherly, half fraternal, of that strong, experienced soul. Families he met where the children had been taught to name his name with reverence, and the parents loved him as the friend and adviser of their youth. This man and that man had been born in Bloomsbury; brought under his own preaching to lay hold on the unspeakable gift; and he had never known it, and might never have known it, but for these years of revelation. It seems right to put these things down for the encouragement of others equally earnest and devoted: if to them the

results of much that they have wrought with pains and prayers is hidden, it is none the less real and enduring; and "the day shall declare it."

This gratifying intercourse with others combined with other kindred influences and the softening effects of sorrow to work a certain change in some aspects of my father's character. All his tenderness at home did not hide from us that out-of-doors there was about him an occasional warmth of language, and an impatience under opposition, that doubtless were to others the subject of less reverent remark. He was indeed a man of war from his youth; the combat had been forced upon him, and his thrusts were not always of the gentlest. But at the close, and for some time before it, there was a distinct process of transformation to be witnessed. He seemed to find more to admire in other men, and less to dislike or to denounce. His estimates became altogether on a more comprehensive scale, and they were expressed in words of studied moderation. So, I believe, some who had at times been his opponents learned to think of him with equal kindliness; and others, who had been distant and doubtful and a little afraid, came frankly forward, and found that they came into the sunshine, and that the sunshine did them good. To us who loved him most and knew him best, I need not hesitate to say, all this was doubly precious, as an index to the full ripening of that rare Christian character under whose broad shelter we had so long found a sure confidence and rest.

His theology, also, in its general spirit and in its subordinate developments, partook of the expansion. It had been pronounced and positive, though never rigid; and in all the great essentials it remained the same. He did not, so far as I am aware, alter the language in which he had been wont to represent the doctrines of Scripture; he had no natural leaning to novel theories or expositions; on the whole, he intrenched himself to the end within the lines of the moderate Calvinism of Andrew Fuller. The difference lay in his increased readiness to consider opposite opinions and to admit of the friendly discussion of his own. There came to be such a candid admission of ignorance, and such a generous appreciation of difficulties, that it warmed one to talk with him on topics of the kind; the more so because, on the other hand, there was such a horror of anything like levity or indifference, and so tenacious an adherence to those central truths which are our life. That hold was never relaxed; and it was maintained, not as men defend a favourite speculation, but with the full force of personal assurance. The Saviour, and His atoning sacrifice for sin, lay at the heart not of his theology alone, but of his life. The text of what was perhaps the noblest of his sermons was also the voice of his daily experience—"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

A multitude of conflicting feelings was thronging in our hearts as we brought up to its last resting-place in London, through the dark November night, all that

remained to us of him whom we had loved and lost. The conquering thought, I remember well, was one of triumph. That thought has never wavered since. It was like bearing some veteran warrior, fallen in the hour of victory, home upon his shield. And our warrior was not fallen, after all; he was laying aside his armour, and entering into the joy of his Lord. Fain would we have kept him with us; perhaps there might have been found a solace for his loneliness, and a settled home for his wandering steps. But for the weary winter months his physical infirmities must have always kept him distant from his children and silenced him from service; and those infirmities, mated with a mind so restless, might have soon made it a burden to exist He was taken from the evil to come; and he could scarcely have been taken in a happier hour. His sons and his surviving daughter were at his side; his brethren in the ministry had gathered round him at Plymouth but a few weeks before, and cheered his heart with their affectionate sympathy; in his old place at Bloomsbury, over the people whom he had served so long and loved so well, one stood like-minded with himself, bearing high the banner which his hands had dropped; around his grave waited a throng that yet only represented the multitude who honoured his name and would cherish his memory. Was it not the fulfilment of the ancient benediction—"Thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel"?

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A, *page* 67.

THE sermon referred to is here given as it stands in the original manuscript, and may interest the reader as an illustration of the young preacher's theology, spirit, and power of composition, at the very threshold of his special studies for the ministry.

THE CONSTRAINING INFLUENCE OF LOVE OF CHRIST.

"For the love of Christ constraineth us."—2 COR. v. 14.

ON no occasion does the man of the world more strikingly develop the difference subsisting between him and the Christian than when he endeavours to account for the existence of that difference. Perceiving an individual, with whose age and circumstances in life he has much in common, adopting plans and pursuing engagements directly the reverse of his own, he sometimes inquires to what this contrariety is to be attributed? And when, in the examination of his own springs of action, and in the investigation of the whole round of human motives, he fails in obtaining a reply, he supposes that there is no alternative but to brand the Christian as an enthusiast, and to ascribe his piety and his zeal to the influence of wild fanaticism or of a bewildered intellect.

Such was the manner in which the enemies of the Apostle Paul attempted the solution of the difficulty in which his intense devotedness had entangled them. But whilst "enthusiasm and insanity" was the cry by which he was assailed, his witness

was in heaven and his record was on high; so that with a high and hallowed fervour he rejoined, "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause." And, dear brethren, as the same mistaken notions are still entertained, and as the motive referred to in the text is still the great spring of action to the Christian, allow us to solicit your prayers and your attention in founding hereupon our Sabbath morning's meditation—"The love of Christ constraineth us."

It has been remarked by Saurin that this passage affords an instance of the sublime ambiguity of the Sacred Scriptures, inasmuch as the phrase here employed may signify either the love of Christ to us or our love to Him; it is, however, the former of these significations which we shall adopt on the present occasion, directing your attention first to the love of Christ toward a guilty world, and then to the constraining influence which this exercises on all who partake of its benefits.

I.

The love of Christ to a guilty world is here presented to our consideration; with regard to which we observe—

1st, *That it was gracious in its origin.*

. . . . . .

God provided everything which man, as a moral agent, required, and then left him to obey and be happy—to disobey and be miserable. The last was the choice he made; another service sought his heart and his obedience, and obtained them. Dissatisfaction with the restriction which God had laid upon him was the first evil symptom; this was speedily followed by a desire to disregard it; and thence it was not long ere the banner of rebellion was unfurled, and man was seen inscribing thereupon as the motto to which all his future actions were to have a reference, "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him?" This standard was reared, and as one generation of men after another entered the world, it was the first object that caught their attention. Around it they immediately rallied, swore allegiance to Satan, vowed opposition to God: invading His rights, despising His authority, daring His vengeance, and sinking heedless and headlong into hell.

Such being the situation of man, to what can we trace

any interference on his behalf? On whom are we to fix our attention as his deliverer? If we turn to any of his own race, we find all are alike traitors against the righteous government of God. If we look to the angelic host—should they mourn over the folly of man and lament its consequences, those consequences they could not remove, nor suggest the means of their removal. And whilst man was thus destitute of a helper, so also was he careless of one, and not only careless, but proudly denying such necessity, and rushing onwards on the thick bosses of God's buckler.

It is in this view of His character we perceive the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who "saw that there was no man who wondered that there was no intercessor," and whose "own arm brought salvation," exclaiming, "Deliver from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom." Yes, dear brethren! the love of Christ was exercised towards man while he was yet in his sins, while he was actually engaged in his rebellion against God. Hence we read that "while we were yet sinners, in due time Christ died for the ungodly;" and "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." . . . . . .

2dly, *It was wonderful in its manifestations.*

Having undertaken the sinner's cause from pure and boundless grace, in fulness of time Christ entered upon the accomplishment of His purposes; and in the final actual development of that purpose we are called upon to behold the most wonderful act of condescension which the universe has ever witnessed. Let us, this morning, in our imaginations adjourn to Bethlehem; not to admire the prospect which was presented from the hill on which it stood, nor the beautiful rivulet that meandered thence to Jerusalem; not indeed to admire any of the wonders of nature, but to witness His incarnation, by whose power all these have been created. At Bethlehem, we behold no splendid and magnificent preparation for the reception of the illustrious stranger, nor do we see an assemblage of the mighty and the majestic to welcome His arrival who is emphatically the King of kings and the Lord of lords. We enter the stable of the inn, and yonder behold a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. Our sympathies are excited by the

poverty of the parents and the forlorn situation of the infant: immediately we seek the particulars of His birth and the account of His parentage, when this reply bursts upon our ear: "That is 'the mighty God, the everlasting Father,' the Creator of the ends of the earth." Yes!—wonder, O heavens! and be astonished, O earth! Your Maker has become incarnate—"for He was made flesh and dwelt among us." Yes, Christian! He who "spake and it was done, who commanded and it stood fast," for the love He bore to you, has taken upon Him your nature in its lowliest, humblest form, since "He made Himself of no reputation, took upon Him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men, that He might become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Wonderful manifestation of love! but this was only the first of a series of such manifestations; for, following Him thence to the last scene of His sojourn on earth, we discover the continual development of His predicted character, that He should be "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" day by day we find Him enduring "the contradiction of sinners against Himself," being "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin;" and at night, returning from the attack of persecution to the distress and destitution of poverty, keenly to feel as He exclaimed, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head."

See your Saviour, Christian, as the time drew near when by His sacrifice and death all the types of the Jewish law were to receive their accomplishment. Behold Him, when one and another circumstance indicated the approach of the great transaction; Satan entering into Judas, and the priests tampering with that wretched man for the betrayal of his Lord. Why did not the Son of God paralyse these malignant designs, and disappoint these diabolical expectations, as He might have done with a glance of His eye? It was because by these very means He had undertaken to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness.

In the performance of the work which the Father had given Him to do, we are next pointed to the Saviour as He stood in the garden of Gethsemane, sweating "as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground;" whilst this state of suffering, dreadful as it must have been, was but a prelude to the

most astonishing and mysterious manifestation of mercy that the Deity has ever made to man,—for, having been exposed to the indignities of an infuriated mob, we now see Him ascending the hill of Calvary, not attended by faithful and affectionate friends, willing to alleviate, though they could not remove, His distress, but deserted by His friends, forsaken by His Father, and submitted to a death cruel and lingering, ignominious and despicable,—being crucified with two thieves. There, as He was hanging upon the accursed tree, was He enduring all that heaven, and earth, and hell could inflict; and yet His love was strong as death—"many waters could not quench it, nor could the floods drown it;" and we behold Him, "mighty to save," bent upon the fulfilment of what He had undertaken, discharging the mighty debt, cancelling the bond which had been given to Divine justice. And then—to the admiration of heaven, to the astonishment of earth, and to the utter discomfiture of hell, exclaiming, as He bowed His head in death,—"It is finished."

We observe, 3dly, *It was glorious in its results.*

This will appear if we reflect on the evils which it has removed and the blessings which it has imparted; but we can never adequately conceive of the evils which it has removed until we can fully realise the purity and power of that Being who declared, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Such was the tremendous denunciation of Jehovah against every child of Adam; and in consequence of this, all mankind must have perished but for the love of Christ—one result of which was the removal of this curse and all its consequences. Hence we read, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." "He who knew no sin was made sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him;" and in consequence of this, "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." So that, instead of beholding an insuperable barrier, guarded by inflexible justice with "a flaming sword, turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life," we see that barrier removed, that sword returned to its sheath, and the justice and holiness of God joining with His mercy in saying to a rebellious world, "Come, and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as

wool, and though they be red like crimson they shall be as white as snow."

Another blessing resulting from the love of Christ is the sanctification of the heart. This was absolutely necessary ere we could hold communion with God or engage in His service. If our sins had been pardoned and we delivered from punishment, yet, without the restoration of the Divine image, we could never have called Him, "Abba, Father." And here, dear brethren, an object presents itself to be accomplished, vast and imposing, and to us apparently impracticable, seeing the human heart is encased in prejudices, and filthy with pollution, the conscience enwrapped in dead works, and the whole man dead in trespasses and sins. Yet this also has been effected; this has resulted from the love of Christ. The communication of the spirit of God having been intrusted to the Saviour, in consequence of His sufferings and death, He has sent that Spirit to cleanse the heart from its pollution, to purge the conscience from dead works, to free the soul from bondage, and to introduce the man into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God,"—and thus Christ is made to us "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

Another glorious result of the love of Christ is the certain possession of everlasting felicity in heaven. "Here we have no continuing city," is a statement which often rejoices the Christian's heart. "I would not live always," is not unfrequently his language as he mourns over his departures from God; while, from the influence which temptation exercises over him, he cries in the agony of his soul—"Oh, wretched man that I am!" Is this the language of any child of God this morning? Are you saying, dear brother, "Who shall deliver me?" Christ will deliver you; for having died to procure your pardon, having given to you His Holy Spirit, He is now preparing for you a place in the mansions of the blessed; and when all things are ready, He will call you to enter upon its possession. Very inadequate, indeed, are all the conceptions which we can form of the glories and blessedness which Christ is preparing for His people;—but we do know this—that in heaven there will be no deceitful heart, no fascinating world, no prowling, powerful foe going about amidst the happy assembly seeking whom he may devour. These enemies may

annoy us in the last moments of our existence; they may follow us to the very threshold of the heavenly Jerusalem; but over that they never shall find admission. Christ has secured this—assuring us that "whatsoever loveth or maketh a lie" shall never enter there; but He has done more than this—the happiness of heaven will not consist merely in deliverance from our foes, but in the actual enjoyment of the purest and most unmingled bliss. Every mode of expression which human language affords has been employed by the sacred writers to convey to us an idea of the joys of heaven; and yet, after having been pointed to a "mansion"—a "house not made with hands"—having been directed to an "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading," having been shown "a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God;" whose foundations are "all manner of precious stones;" whose "gates are pearl;" whose "streets are pure gold;" whose "river is the water of life, clear as crystal;" whose very light is that which emanates from the Deity;—having been told all this, we are then told that the bliss of heaven is "unspeakable and full of glory;" that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." And this bliss, dear brethren, all this bliss and all this glory is the result of the love of Christ towards a guilty world, since He, "having been made perfect through suffering, became the Author of eternal salvation to every one that believeth."

Such, then, is the view with which we present you of the love of Christ, gracious in its origin, inasmuch as there was nothing in us to deserve it; wonderful in its manifestations, bringing Jesus from heaven, and leading Him to an ignominious death; glorious in its results, procuring pardon of sin, sanctification of heart, and an abundant entrance into mansions of glory. We proceed to notice—

II.

The constraining influence which this exerts on all who partake of its benefits.

The contemplation of the love of Christ produces effects of the most powerful kind; it creates a reciprocity of feeling between the Saviour and the individuals who know anything of it

experimentally; it "constrains" them; it will not let them rest; it bears them along with itself, no longer to live unto themselves, but unto "Him who died for them, and rose again." And we remark that this constraining influence will have reference—

1. *To our love to the Saviour.*

If it be true, in any case, that affection begets affection, that towards the individual from whom we have received a favour we exercise esteem; then how intensely must Christ be esteemed by him whom He hath loved even unto death. Such an one feels, while he enjoys a sense of pardon, that Christ obtained it; whilst he has peace with God, that he is justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Actuated by considerations such as these the love of gratitude is excited. He delights in the contemplation of the Saviour's character, counting him the "chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely;" saying with David, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." Christian, is it not so? Do you not love the brethren because they love Christ, and because you discover in them an assimilation to His character in whom your soul delighteth? And receiving from your Lord the inquiry, "Lovest thou Me?" are you not prepared to reply, "Lord, Thou knowest all things," and to rejoin in the language—

"Rather than not my Saviour love,
Oh, may I cease to be!"

Such will be the reply of every Christian. Hesitancy there may be, in consequence of infirmity, but if His love has reached our hearts, we shall be constrained to love Him in return.

2. *It will have reference to our obedience to the law of God.*

"If ye love Me," said the Saviour, "keep My commandments." So that the Christian is not constrained merely to the indulgence of feeling, but is summoned to action. He is called upon, indeed, to give Christ the highest place in his heart, because He will occupy no other; but this is to be no profound secret wrapped in the recesses of his bosom. It is to be made manifest, to be embodied in his everyday deportment, and that to such a degree that men may take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus. This, dear brethren, is a point well

worthy of our serious consideration, in order to guard us against a sentiment which approaches nearer to the pride and impiety that first drove Satan from heaven than any other with which the Church of Christ has ever been infested; for whilst it is true that one of the glorious results of the love of Christ is that He has for ever removed the curse of the law from those whom He loves, it is equally true that He has entirely left untouched every claim that it makes upon their obedience, or rather He has invested it with still more awful sanctions. He has exhibited sin in darker colours than otherwise it would ever have assumed. He has presented it as the abominable thing which God hateth, inasmuch as in order to its expiation He withheld not Him, His only-begotten Son; and therefore, if the love of Christ constrains us at all, it will constrain us to the hatred of sin, to the love and practice of holiness. We are told by the Psalmist that the law of God is exceeding broad. It is at once extensive and comprehensive, not only extending to every man, but comprehending every action of every man, taking this as an axiom, that there is no one point in his existence, no one disposition of his mind, no one action of his life, on which its requirements are not to have an immediate bearing. To obedience to this law, extensive and comprehensive as it is, does the love of Christ constrain the Christian, operating in every situation he may occupy, and influencing him in every relation he may sustain. If amid the circles in which he moves he be already distinguished as a member of civil society or of domestic life, if his probity, his integrity, his kindness has been such that it has even become a proverb, yet let the constraining influence of the great motive of our text be brought to bear upon that man, and it exalts him infinitely higher, because it withers and shrivels up all the selfishness so natural to the human heart, whilst it purifies and sublimates whatever sin has left that is amiable, or generous, or noble. And if, on the contrary, this great principle be implanted in the heart of a man whose life and conversation has been distinguished by everything mean, dishonest, and impure, its hallowed and constraining influence is speedily manifested in the abandonment of everything that is unholy in practice and disposition. Dishonesty is exchanged for integrity; meanness and mistrust for candour and generosity; the novel exchanged for the sacred volume; the theatre for the

social prayer-meeting ; the midnight revel and the bacchanalian song for the family altar and the hymn of praise—and all this in obedience to that law which Christ has magnified and made honourable. He perceives that on these things the Almighty has placed His ban ; and with the love of Christ in his heart, and the interdiction of Jehovah on any object or on any pursuit, that object is rejected and that pursuit is abandoned. And it must be thus ; sin cannot exist when brought into contact with the love of Christ. The atmosphere of Calvary destroys its vitality, and in proportion as that is inhaled so will sin wither and droop and die.

As we have been walking on the bank of a noble river, we have seen it bearing onwards some substance that may have dropped upon its bosom ; we have marked its progress, when, ere long, by the confluence of some minor streams, it has been momentarily retarded, and it revolves, and revolves, and again revolves, until the vehemence of the mightier volume prevails, and bears it forward in triumph. So with the love of Christ in its influence on every Christian : it bears him forward ; and though, by the influence of temptation, his course may be frequently impeded, yet by the energy, the resistless influence of this mighty motive, he will, he must advance in the pursuit of "whatever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," until he shall at length enter upon a state of being where he shall be holy, as God Himself is holy.

3. *It will have reference to our zeal in the Saviour's service.* It will be well to distinguish here between our obedience to the law of God, whose requirements have received such awful sanctions from the sufferings of the Saviour, and our engaging in the service of the Saviour, as the great Head of His Church. It is to be remembered that the design of Jesus Christ was the establishment of a spiritual kingdom, whose subjects were to be gathered from men of every nation and kindred under heaven, by the use of certain means of His own appointment ; and to the employment of these means, and to the establishment of this kingdom, will the love of Christ constrain the Christian. Of this we have a splendid instance in the case of the Apostle Paul. The moment this great principle took possession of his heart, he conferred not with flesh and blood, but

immediately cried out, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" So overwhelmed was he with a consciousness of his obligation to redeeming love, that there was a zeal enkindled which recognised no limitation of country or of clime, which found for him a pathway across the trackless desert and the fathomless ocean, which made no calculation as to possible dangers or probable results, but brought him directly into contact with all the prejudices and opposition of mankind, and carried him through one and another scene of persecution, until it led him to a martyr's death, and introduced him to the possession of a martyr's crown. The love of Christ "constrained" him, and he counted not his life dear, so that he might "finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he received from the Lord Jesus."

Under the influence of this motive, from the Apostle's time down to our own, similar zeal has been frequently manifested. Not to mention the glorious army of martyrs with whose dying groans yonder arena has so often resounded, we point for an illustration of our remark to men who have gone to distant lands to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. To a man totally unacquainted with this great spring of action, the conduct of the modern missionary must be perfectly inexplicable; and by too many of us, dear brethren, who profess to know somewhat of its influence, a mere conjecture is all that can be indulged. But it should not be thus; and in order to inflame our own zeal, let us watch the progress of this holy man. See, when in the solitude of his closet, the feelings of which he has long been the subject assume the form of a solemn and determined resolution. Behold him when, having sought assistance and help from above, he endeavours to disclose his intentions to those whom he loves as his own soul. He hesitates: on the one hand, the love of country, of kindred, and of home, with all their interesting associations; on the other, the love of Christ, with all its wondrous and magnificent display, presses upon his attention. These for a moment seem to clash, and he knows not to which he must yield; but the latter prevails, bears him forward in his resolution, and we next discover him making known to his kindred the determination he has formed. And here all must be conjecture, for who can describe his agitation and turmoil of feeling, as a beloved parent pleads her declining

years and her growing infirmities for a suspension of his purpose? Her grief inspires eloquence, her fear of bereavement produces earnestness; the loud throbbing of his heart, and the hesitancy depicted on his countenance, excite hope and perseverance; and she appears to be succeeding, until, by an effort more than human, his spirit bounds to Calvary, and hearing from his expiring Saviour, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me cannot be My disciple," the pang ceases.

The resolution becomes fixed and irrevocable. He never loved his parent with such deep feeling as at that moment, yet this must yield in the recollection of the love of Christ. He can say, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." Thus actuated, he breaks through all the impediments which affection, or interest, or ambition would throw in his way, until we at length behold him a voluntary exile on the shore of some far distant land. Not to follow him as he penetrates where human footsteps have never trod—as he grapples now with all the sophistry of the Brahmin, and anon with all the ignorance of the savage—let us enter his dying chamber, and there, with only one, if with one, bosom on which he can lean, and into which he can pour his sorrows or his joys—there, with only one Christian companion, and she heart-broken and disconsolate, we have an illustration of our remark that the love of Christ constrains to zeal in His service. It was this that brought the missionary from his native land and severed him from all the sympathies of affectionate hearts; and it is under the influence of this that he is sinking into a foreign grave, far from the sepulchre of his fathers—a martyr to the cause of Christ. And say, dear brethren, in the recollection of Smith, of Chamberlain, of Henry Martyn, and of Griffiths, say whether any inscription could be found for their graves more appropriate or expressive than the language of our text, "The love of Christ constrained them!"

Notwithstanding all this, it may be said, that in ordinary cases, this motive cannot thus operate. If by this it be simply meant that we cannot all become missionaries, and give such splendid proofs of our zeal as those to which we have referred, the objection is admitted, but not otherwise, because the manner in which any action is performed, will bear some proportion to the worth and importance of the motive by which

we are actuated; and that man is badly prepared for the office of a Christian minister, or of a Sunday-school teacher, or of any other department of labour in the Christian Church, who has not caught somewhat of the missionary spirit, and who is not prepared, should such be the will of God, to enrol himself among the men who have hazarded their lives for the name of the Lord Jesus. And though the worldling may smile as we talk thus, and the infidel scoff as he brands us with enthusiasm, yet where is the man who can recollect Bethlehem with all its poverty, Gethsemane with all its agony, Calvary with all its torture and ignominy, as inseparably connected with all he has, and with all he hopes for, who hesitates to exclaim—

> "On such a theme, 'tis impious to be calm;
> Passion is reason, transport, temper here."

NOTE B, *page* 97.

The reader may like to see a specimen of this ingenious correspondence. This is one: it suggests the character of the conversation which ensued.

MR. YOUNGMAN TO MR. BROCK.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have lately been reading a work entitled "The Literary Remains of Hazlitt," who is accounted a man of great metaphysical sagacity. One of his essays is on the subject of liberty and necessity, which occasioned in my mind a train of thoughts, the outline of which I am desirous to lay before you. Your faculties are fresher than mine for such an investigation. Mr. Hazlitt, after Hobbes, considers the inquiry to be essentially one with respect to cause and effect; as the question really is, says he, whether an event can happen without a cause. He describes an action as taking place whenever the foregoing circumstances form a sufficient cause, which, as sufficient, must also be necessary, and which, by the way, seems to me something like begging the question. Free agency he considers, with Edwards, to exist when the agent is not hindered by external circumstances from following his volitions. Thus the agent may be free, but his volition

necessary; consequently the action must also be necessary, as proceeding from a necessary volition.

To ascertain this point by an experiment, I select the case of Eve, as, from its peculiar nature, freed from all extraneous circumstances. Eve was formed, like all other human beings, with an innate or instinctive appetite for knowledge, on which her temptation was founded; but she was warned, by an appeal to her reason and religion, not to gratify that appetite in this particular way. She, however, chose to neglect the warning and to eat of the fruit; and the question is whether the action was free or necessary. If we say, as proceeding from a necessary volition as its cause, it must be necessary, then she was formed either with her curiosity too strong for her reason or too weak; for the action was injurious. If we say her volition was free, then we must abandon the doctrine of necessity *in toto*. In endeavouring to unravel this mystery, I ask whether to say we *desire* a thing, or *will* to have a thing, is the same; or shorter—whether *desire* is the same as *volition;* and I answer in the negative. Desire is a state of mind which arises from the relation between its inward constitution and some outward circumstance. Volition is a determination of the mind to take means for the attainment of the object. Are both necessary? Are both free? Or is one necessary and the other free?

To answer these questions, I go back to the case of Eve. She saw that the tree was pleasing to the eye, and good for food, and greatly to be desired to make one wise; and she must, from her nature, desire to obtain its fruit. Desire is, therefore, the necessary result of the actual relation between the mind and the object contemplated. But did this desire necessarily determine the will? By no means. Against this was set the authority and threatenings of God, and the motives to abstinence thence arising. The volition was the determination of the mind, freely formed from a comparison of the opposing motives, and the action following that volition was free, like the volition from which it sprang. Thus, to give a more general formula,—desires are necessary, but volitions are free. And desires are a part of the motives on which the mind forms its own volitions or determinations, by which its actions are produced, and which must partake of the

character of the volitions. If the volition is free, the action is free, and the agent, as a free agent, is responsible for the consequences, as far as he had the means of knowing them. This I call philosophical liberty, and it seems to me to belong to the perfect state of man.

It is so long since I considered the subject that I am not aware whether or not what I have advanced is novel; at least there is nothing like it in Hazlitt, who still seems inclined to reject the doctrine of necessity. It may be owing to the shallowness of my thinking on metaphysical subjects, but to me this view is satisfactory as to the abstract question. Then as to the theological view of the subject, we believers in revelation know that a perfect human being, without any sinful bias, may, in the exercise of his liberty, become a sinner; that is, by suffering the desire to govern the will. Subsequent to transgression the tendency to this will continually become greater, till the habit of subjecting the volitions to the desires becomes nearly irresistible. This applies to individuals, but not to the race; still the original charter of liberty is never entirely forfeited, though the contest to maintain it becomes daily more strenuous and difficult. Our method in dealing with others under such circumstances is to endeavour to bring back children, in education, to the state of Eve, that is, to give reason and religion their due exercise in controlling the power of the desires over the volitions, and especially to endeavour so to regulate the desires as to place them not in opposition to, but in accordance with, the higher authorities of the mind, and then would the human character rise to its intended perfection. With regard to those whose desires have been vitiated, and whose reason has been habitually subjugated to them, the Gospel, in the efficacy of its provisions, the adaptedness of its motives, and the power of its administrator, is the only remedy; and even when this takes effect, life is too often consumed in a careless, and often a fruitless, contest between the old man and the new; between the subjection of the will to "the lusts of the flesh," and the establishment of "the glorious liberty of the sons of God."

One sheet thus contains the outline which I promised, but, if I mistake not, it touches on high, and broad, and deep matters, which might afford subjects of profitable meditation

to the latest hour of life. If they should excite in you any new or profitable thoughts, the knowledge thereof would afford a pleasure to your ever affectionate friend,

WM. YOUNGMAN.

September 1836.

Rev. Wm. Brock.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I send you a few additional thoughts on the case of our Mother Eve.

It has been observed that Eve, seeing that "the tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise," could not but desire to eat of it, but before she could come to a volition to do so, there were other circumstances for her consideration. Her Creator had forbidden her to eat of the tree, under the penalty of death for disobedience, and she appears to have followed this process of reasoning :—

"This tree is good for food, and in eating of it my eyes will be opened, and I shall be as God, knowing good and evil. How desirable to partake of its fruit! But my Creator has threatened me with the penalty of death if I do so. The serpent has assured me that 'I shall not surely die,' and I see that he has eaten and yet lives, and has, moreover, acquired the faculty of speech and reason. But whom am I to trust in this matter? The great and good God, or this unknown animal—a creature also of His power? I am bound also to obey His commands—nevertheless this seems so great a good, that I *will* venture all, and eat." "And she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat." I take leave to say that this consequence followed neither necessarily nor legitimately from the premises.

For we may conceive of another woman, made and endowed exactly like the former, and exposed to a like temptation, who would reason and act thus :—"I see that this tree is much to be desired, for food and intelligence, and I have a *desire* to eat of it, but my Creator has told me that 'in the day when I eat thereof I shall surely die.' This serpent, however, assures me that 'I shall *not* surely die.' But who is this serpent, that I should credit him, and disbelieve the word of God, by whom I was formed, and in whom I live and move and have my being? Moreover, this God is my Creator and Governor, and it would

be a breach of *duty* to disobey Him. He is my Benefactor, He gave me being and all my faculties. He has given me the whole of the fruit of this garden, with only one exception, and which doubtless is for my good. It would be *ingratitude* to disobey Him; I will adhere to Him and His word—I will not eat." This I take to be a legitimate consequence from all the previous circumstances; but that it was not a *necessary* volition is shown by the conduct of the first Eve. And if this latter determination is within the faculties of the agent, and follows naturally from the conditions of the case supposed, it shows that the will of the first Eve was not *necessarily* determined, though formed upon motives suggested by the actual circumstances.

This case illustrates the nature of *moral* government. Physical government is by impulse, animal by instinct; but moral government is by motives addressed to the reason, leaving the agent free in his determinations. Under this system two agents may be formed and endowed alike, and exposed to the same trial, with a different result. Some may say we cannot understand how the same causes should have a different effect. That may be, and yet the thing be true. Herein is the mystery of God's moral government. The mind is subject to motives. The motives are in themselves the same. But the mind itself gives them their efficacy. It is not determined by the real value of the motive, but assigns to it a factitious value in cases of error. If the mind were subject to the real value of motives, or if the factitious value were dictated by external circumstances and not produced by itself, then its volitions would be necessary. The question is whether objects of sense or faith shall influence it, whether it shall choose the present or the future good; and in this determination it must either be self-moved or be determined by an external power. In the first case it is a free agent, in the last a necessitated one. *Utrum horum?* Herein is involved the question of human responsibility, and of God's moral government, sanctioned by rewards and punishments.—My dear friend, ever yours, W. Y.

October 10, 1836.

NOTE C, *page* 236.

MR. LANCE AND MR. KEMP.

"Dear Lance's end was beautiful. He had desired to be wheeled up to the window that he might see the sun set once more. His wish was complied with, and he expressed himself happy in his Saviour, and contented with his lot. Presently he seemed worse, and without a paroxysm departed to be with Christ. Often had he spoken to me of his dread of dying, but when the dying came there was nothing to dread. Another instance this, of which I have seen so many, that as the day so the strength is,—the day of our latter end."

Dr. Brock wrote thus on 12th July 1864 to Mr. George T. Kemp, who has himself recently passed into the unseen in a manner not less "beautiful." It is a pleasure once more to record his name in the memoir of one who loved him as a brother, and who must have welcomed him as he came up from the shore of the great river. When a long and painful illness was apparently drawing to its close, he desired the retirement and tranquillity of boat-life on the Nile, surrounded only by beloved members of his family and a medical attendant. As his last hour approached, the native crew, with a delicacy hardly to be expected of them, ceased their usual chanting, and went about their work in silence. Perceiving this, he sent them a message that although he was dying he was perfectly happy, and wished them to sing as much as they pleased. He died off Dabôd, in Nubia, on March 20, 1877, and was interred in the cemetery within view of his own house, at Beechwood, Rochdale. The facsimile of Dr. Brock's handwriting attached to the portrait is taken from the letter above quoted.

THE END.

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